



Swami Sivananda

Ethical Teachings

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To

**EVERY MAN AND WOMAN OF THE WORLD
Who Is Ever Seeking Happiness,
For Happiness Is Attainable Only Through
A Life of Virtue and Goodness**



SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

Born on the 8th September, 1887, in the illustrious family of Sage Appayya Dikshitar and several other renowned saints and savants, Sri Swami Sivananda had a natural flair for a life devoted to the study and practice of Vedanta. Added to this was an inborn eagerness to serve all and an innate feeling of unity with all mankind.

His passion for service drew him to the medical career; and soon he gravitated to where he thought that his service was most needed. Malaya claimed him. He had earlier been editing a health journal and wrote extensively on health problems. He discovered that people needed right knowledge most of all; dissemination of that knowledge he espoused as his own mission.

It was divine dispensation and the blessing of God upon mankind that the doctor of body and mind renounced his career and took to a life of renunciation to qualify for ministering to the soul of man. He settled down at Rishikesh in 1924, practised intense austerities and shone as a great Yogi, saint, sage and Jivanmukta.

In 1932 Swami Sivananda started the Sivanandashram. In 1936 was born The Divine Life Society. In 1948 the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy was organised. Dissemination of spiritual knowledge and training of people in Yoga and Vedanta were their aim and object. In 1950 Swamiji undertook a lightning tour of India and Ceylon. In 1953 Swamiji convened a 'World Parliament of Religions'. Swamiji is the author of over 300 volumes and has disciples all over the world, belonging to all nationalities, religions and creeds. To read Swamiji's works is to drink at the Fountain of Wisdom Supreme. On 14th July, 1963 Swamiji entered Mahasamadhi.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The reading public is too well aware that a distinct feature of Sri Swami Sivanandaji's forceful writings is that he does not merely write on a subject but primarily writes about it directly to the reader. His interest in a subject is mainly with regard to its practical implications in connection with man. He is the saint and awakener and as such he makes a study of man his foremost concern. This work, "**Ethical Teachings**," more than ever testifies to this. The reader will find that this volume is not merely of a definitional and informative character but treats of ethics as specially practically manifest in the daily conduct of everyone.

Works on ethics there have been. More often than not they dealt purely with the theoretical aspect of it, various types of ethical theory, evolution of ethical thought in the course of history, etc. What man today urgently needs is to know how exactly he ought to act and live his life if he were to conform to the basic principles of goodness and virtue. This need, the present volume, most eminently fulfils.

A glance at the contents will reveal how no aspect of the subject has been left untouched. Extremely valuable instructions are given to the students, householders, retired men and ascetics alike. The section headed 'Domestic Ethics' contains the most precious teachings to ladies in particular. The Lawyer, Doctor, Trader, Industrialist and Politician will find sagely advice from the pen of a saint who has known the very essence of true Dharma. The final Chapter, bearing the name of the book, is a veritable treasure-house wherein is to be found a wealth of the most precious gems of teachings. And as is invariably the case, the revered author has dealt with all doubts and difficulties that are likely to arise in the

actual following of these precepts. We have the greatest pleasure in putting this invaluable work before the public, for we feel perfectly confident that it is going to be of utmost, and immense help in making the human nature grow into the Divine and in ushering in a blessed new era in the land.

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

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Ethical Teachings

Chapter I

WHAT IS ETHICS?

1. Ethical Science

Ethics is the science of conduct. Ethics is the study of what is right or good in conduct. Ethical science shows the way in which human beings behave towards each other as well as towards other creatures. It contains systematised principles on which a man should act. Without ethics you cannot have any progress in the spiritual path. Ethics is the foundation of Yoga, the corner-stone of Vedanta and the strong pillar on which the edifice of Bhakti Yoga rests.

Ethics is right conduct or Sadachara. The mark of Dharma is Achara or right conduct. Achara is the mark of good. From Achara only, Dharma is born. Dharma enhances life. Man attains prosperity, fame, here and hereafter through the practice of Dharma. Achara is the highest Dharma. It is the root of all Tapas. It supports the whole universe. It leads one to Eternal Happiness and Immortality.

Ethics is morality. Morality is the gateway to God-realisation. It is the master-key of religion. He who leads a moral or virtuous life, attains freedom, perfection or Moksha.

Ethics is a relative science. What is good for one man may not be good for another man. What is good at one time may not be good at another time and at another place. Ethics is relative to the man himself and to his surroundings.

Every religion has its own ethics. The primary truth of every religion is the foundation of ethics or morality or the science of right conduct. Yama and Niyama of

Patanjali Maharshi on the Raja Yoga Philosophy constitute the best ethics for a Yoga practitioner. The Manu Smriti, Yajnavalkya Smriti, Parasara Smriti, all explain the code of right conduct. The noble Eightfold path of Buddhism is the essence of the ethical teachings of Lord Buddha. The Ten Commandments of Judaism, and the Sermon on the Mount by Lord Jesus contain the ethical teachings for the uplift of humanity.

The first thing you learn from every religion is the unity of all Selves. It is the only one Self which is immanent in all creatures. All human relations exist because of this unity of Self. The basis of the unity of Self is the Universal Brotherhood and the Universal Love. Yajnavalkya said to Maitreyi, his wife, "O Maitreyi! Not indeed for the love of husband is the husband dear; for the love of the Self is the husband dear. And so the wife, sons, property, friends, worlds and even the Devas themselves are all dear because the one Self abides in all." If you injure another man, you injure yourself. If you help another man, you help yourself. There is one life, one consciousness in all creatures. This is the foundation of the ethics of each and every Religion.

Practice of ethics will help you to live in harmony with your neighbours, friends, your own family-members, fellow-beings, and all other people. It will confer on you lasting happiness and Moksha. Your heart will be purified. It will keep your conscience ever clean. A moral man who follows strictly the principles of ethics, will not deviate even a fraction of an inch from the path of Dharma or righteousness. He earns undying reputation for his practice of ethics. He becomes an embodiment of Dharma. He only leaves the physical body; but his name lives as long as the world lasts.

We have human morality, family morality, social morality, national morality, professional morality. A doctor has his own professional ethics. He should not divulge to others the secrets of his patients. He should be kind and sympathetic towards his patients. He should

not give injections of water and charge highly as for best medicines. Although the guardian of the patient did not pay the fees of his last visit, he should go voluntarily and attend the cases. He should treat the poor cases freely. An advocate also has his own ethics. He should not coach up false witnesses. He should not take up the weak cases, only for the sake of fees. He should argue freely for the poor people. There is ethics for a business-man also. He should not expect much profit. He should do much charity. He should not speak falsehood even in his business.

Do not do any act which does not bring good to others or that act for which you will feel ashamed after doing. Do such acts which are praiseworthy and which bring good to others. This is the brief description of right conduct, highest Dharma. Moral precepts have been made to free the creatures from all injuries.

The ethics of Western Philosophers is superficial. It is a mere surface ethics. But the Eastern ethics is subtle, sublime and profound. All religions teach the ethical rules such as: "Do not kill; do not injure others; love your neighbour; etc." But they have not given the reason. Only Hindu ethics says, "There is one All-pervading Atman. It is the inner soul of all beings. It is hidden in all creatures. It is the common, pure consciousness. If you injure your neighbour you actually injure yourself." This is the basic metaphysical truth that underlies all Hindu ethical codes.

Stick to Sadachara or right conduct and attain Immortality. Practise ethics and reach the illimitable dominion of eternal bliss! Grow. Evolve. Build up your character. Consult the Sastras and Mahatmas whenever you are in doubt. Attain the goal of life and rest in the inner harmony!

2. Foundation of Ethics

Ahimsa, Satyam, Brahmacharya are the very foundation of ethics, Yoga and Vedanta. Practice of these three virtues is a Maha Vrata or great universal vow, for the whole mankind. These are Samanya or Sadachara Dharma (common duty) of men. The practice of these cardinal virtues purifies the heart and steadies the mind, and prepares the Antahkarana for the reception of the transcendental light. Dharma is rooted in these virtues. All enmities and hatred cease in the presence of one who is established in Ahimsa. Brahman or the Eternal is Truth itself. It can be realised only by practising Purity.

The practice of endurance (Titiksha) steadfastness (Dhairya), control of senses (Indriya-Nigraha) and other Sadachara Karmas (virtuous deeds) aim in making a man self-sufficient, independent and free from external bondage, physical and social.

Ahimsa or refraining from injury is a self-evident duty of every man. It is not simply in the negative sense of mere cessation from harm or injury (Himsa-abhava). It is a positive definite resolve or internal Sankalpa or the attitude of the will not to hurt any living creature. You should practise Ahimsa in thought, word and deed. No thought of revenge or ill-will should arise in the mind.

Injuring others gives rise to hatred and enmity. From these arise violence and revenge. Fear also comes to reign. Where fear and violence reign, there is destroyed peace and society will be in chaos. This is the real condition of modern society today. It is in a state of dormant or suppressed chaos only. There is just a semblance of order outside. Violence, disorder and hatred of one sort is kept suppressed by force, violence and hatred of another kind. Society is filled with crime, open and concealed in spite of police forces visible and secret. All this constant fear, tension and tug-of-war between man and man would vanish if Ahimsa comes to be practised by one and all.

Brahmacharya also is not the mere abstaining from the outward act of sexual indulgence, but also implies a definite resolve or internal Sankalpa or the attitude of the will not to long for sexual indulgence even in thought. You must observe Brahmacharya in thought, word and deed.

Asteya is not mere refraining from theft. It is not mere cessation from appropriating what belongs to another but implies an internal Sankalpa or resolve not to think of misappropriation of any object belonging to others and to disapprove and scorn all acts of misappropriation as unrighteous.

The inner motives of a man form the seed and root of all his life's activities. If it is pure all the subsequent consequences are pure and good. Else only evil and unhappiness will accrue. A man of purity becomes a positive elevating influence, affecting all beneficially; whereas a man of impurity vitiates everything he contacts. Therefore it is a moral obligation of the individual to society to keep purity of character and be a force for good in society. Else he harms them.

You must have Bhava-Suddhi or purification of the motive. Acts done with pure motive only will be conducive to morality. There must be an internal Sankalpa or resolve or attitude of the will to be free from all impure feelings of pride, self-esteem, etc., in the discharge of duties. Only then you will have purity of motive.

3. Dharma

Etymologically, Dharma means 'that which upholds' this world or the people of this world, or the whole creation from microcosm to the macrocosm. It is the Eternal Divine Law of the Supreme Lord. The whole creation is held together by the all-powerful Law of God. Practice of Dharma, therefore, means to recognise these laws and abide by them.

That which leads to the goal is Dharma. That which leads to the path of perfection and pristine glory is Dharma. That which makes your life divine is Dharma. That which makes you to ascend unto Godhead is Dharma. That which helps you to have direct communion with the Lord is Dharma. God is the centre of Dharma. Dharma is the heart of Hindu Ethics. The principle of unity, righteousness and holiness is Dharma. It is your sole companion after death. It protects you after death, if you protect it now. If you transgress it now, your transgression will pursue even after your departure and destroy you. Therefore it is the sole refuge of humanity.

Dharma means the Achara or the regulation of life. Achara is the supreme Dharma. It is the basis of Tapas and austerity. It leads to wealth, beauty, longevity and continuity of lineage.

Dharma is given the foremost rank in the scriptures among the four Purusharthas, the grand objects of human aspirations. Through Dharma, the other three, Artha, Kama and Moksha come automatically to you, because, through the practice of Dharma alone one can achieve his goal of life and crown himself with eternal bliss and supreme peace.

The four Vedas, the Smriti-texts, the behaviour of those who have entered into their spirit and act according to their injunctions, the conduct of holy men and satisfaction of one's own self—these are all the bases of Dharma. The only authority in the matter of Dharma is the Vedas.

That which is Dharma is verily the Truth. Truthfulness, contentment, self-restraint, non-stealing, purity, control of anger, discrimination between the right and wrong, between the real and the unreal, spiritual knowledge, control of the senses come under the general Dharma or the universal Dharma according to Manu.

As enumerated in Mahabharata the performance of Sraaddha or offering oblations to the forefathers, religious austerity, truth, restraint of anger, loyalty to and contentment with one's own wife, purity, learning, absence of envy, knowledge of the Self and forbearance are the fundamentals of Dharma.

As detailed in Padma Purana, the six characteristics of Dharma are, the bestowing of gifts to deserving persons, fixing one's thoughts on the Lord, adoration of one's parents, offering a portion of the daily meal to all creatures and giving a morsel of food to cows.

All other religions also lay stress on Dharma. Buddhism, Christianity, Jainism, Sikhism and Islam are all remarkably alive to its value. Plato, Socrates, Aristotle are all striking examples in the history of the West in keeping up Dharma.

Dharma includes all external deeds as well as thoughts and other mental practices which tend to elevate the character of a man. Dharma comes from the Divine and leads you also to the Divine.

Follow the Dharma with zeal and enthusiasm! Discharge your duties well and attain the Supreme and enjoy the eternal bliss!

4. A Query on Dharma

An aspirant went to Vedavyasa and said, "O Maharshi, Avatar of Vishnu, I am in a dilemma. I cannot properly comprehend the right significance of the term 'Dharma.' Some say that it is right conduct. Others say, that which leads to Nisreyasa (Moksha) and Abhyudaya (happiness) is Dharma. While some others remark 'Anything, any action that takes you to the goal is Dharma. Anything, any action that brings you down is Adharma.' Lord Krishna says, 'Even sages are puzzled to understand perfectly what is Dharma. What is Adharma? Gahana Karmano Gatih.' Mysterious is the path of action. I am bewildered. O Maharshi! Kindly give

me a very, very easy definition of Dharma to enable me to follow Dharma in all my actions."

Maharshi Vyasa said, "O Aspirant, hear me. I shall suggest an easy method. Remember the following sayings with great care when you do any action: 'Do as you would be done by. Do unto others, as you wish others do unto you.' You will be saved from all troubles. If you follow these wise maxims you can never give any pain unto others. Practise this in your daily life. Even if you fail one hundred times, it does not matter. Your old Samskaras, *Asubha Vasanas* are your real enemies. They will come in the way as stumbling blocks. But persevere. You will succeed in the attainment of the Goal."

5. Right Conduct

Abstinence from injury in thought, word and deed, mercy to all creatures, charity, control of anger, freedom from malice and pride, restraint of senses, and to follow the teachings of Sastras and Brahmanas, constitute the praiseworthy behaviour.

That act or exertion which does not do good to others, or that act for which one has to feel shame, should never be done.

That act, on the other hand, should be done for which one may be lauded in society. This is a brief description of what right conduct is.

6. Purity of Motive

Purity of motive (Anupadhi) is a Samanya Dharma or common duty of every man. It is the motive that counts in the performance of an action. If an action is performed with a selfish motive it binds a man to the wheel of births and deaths. If it is done with a pure motive in a disinterested manner, it will purify the heart and lead to the attainment of the final emancipation.

Right and wrong are to be determined not by the objective consequences but by the nature of subjective intention of the agent.

God looks to the motive of the doer. Lord Krishna says, "He who is free from the egoistic notion, whose reason is unaffected, though he slays these people, he slayeth not, nor is bound" VIII-17. "Having abandoned attachment to the fruit of action, always content, nowhere seeking refuge, he is not doing anything although doing actions" IV-20.

Before you perform any action scrutinize your motive. If there is selfishness give up that action. It takes some time to purify the motives. Go on doing actions incessantly and watch your motives. Gradually the motives will become purer and purer. Selfishness is deep-rooted. Strenuous efforts, patience, perseverance and vigilance are needed to root it out entirely.

Lord Rama fought with Ravana. Ravana also engaged himself in battle. But the motives of both were different though the action was the same. Sri Rama fought in order to establish Dharma and protect the people from the trouble and havoc of wicked Ravana. He had no selfish interests. But Ravana had an evil motive.

A Karma Yogi works in the society intensely with more zeal than a worldly man. The action is the same, but the motives are different, in each person. The Karma Yogi marches forward towards the Goal or the *summum bonum* but the worldly man entangles himself through his impure motive of self-interest.

Cultivate purity of motives again and again. Persist. Watch the mind carefully. Work without expectation of fruits, and idea of agency. Surrender all actions and their fruits to the Lord. You will be freed from the bonds of Karma and attain Supreme harmony, highest good, undecaying felicity.

7. Ethics: Eastern and Western

Western ethics is superficial. It is surface ethics. It treats a little of "good and evil," "right and wrong" conduct and behaviour. Eastern ethics is profound. The whole Sanatana Dharma is built upon ethics. Yoga and Vedanta are based on ethics. No salvation is possible without ethical perfection.

Western ethics does not sufficiently treat of absolute self-control and Brahmacharya, cultivation of divine virtues and eradication of vices. There is neither Tapas nor asceticism nor control of the senses. Eastern ethics gives paramount importance to Dama or perfect restraint of all the senses. Eastern ethics lays great emphasis on self-control, virtuous divine life and righteousness. There is intense asceticism. There is perfect control of the out-going senses.

Western ethics does not speak a word on Atman or Soul. It speaks of a little social service, altruism, humanitarianism, philanthropy. Eastern ethics says: there is one Immortal Soul in all creatures. There is one common consciousness. If you hurt any other creature, you hurt yourself. If you serve another man, you serve yourself. By serving others you purify your heart and purification of heart leads to descent of divine light and final emancipation or Mukti.

Western ethics may make one a dry philosopher but not a sage or a Yogi. Eastern ethics makes one a dynamic sage or a dynamic Yogi. It transforms man into Divinity.

8. Ethical Culture

Ethical culture will result in ethical perfection. An ethical man is more powerful than an intellectual man. Ethical culture brings in various sorts of Siddhis or occult powers. If you study Yoga Sutras you will find a clear description of the powers that manifest by observance of the practices of Ahimsa, Satyam, Asteya, Brahmacharya and Aparigraha. The nine Riddhis roll

under the feet of an ethically developed man. They are ready to serve him.

The philosopher need not necessarily be a moral man or ethical man; but a spiritual man must necessarily be moral. Morality goes hand in hand with spirituality. Morality co-exists with spirituality. The three kinds of Tapas, viz., physical, verbal and mental that are prescribed in the seventeenth chapter of the Gita, the practice of Yama in Raja Yoga philosophy, and the noble Eightfold path of the Buddhists, viz., right thinking, right endeavour, right action, right living, etc., are all best calculated to develop the moral side of man. Sadachara or right conduct aims at making a man moral, so that he may be fit for the reception of Atma-Jnana or the realisation of the Supreme Tattva.

You should always try your level best to speak the truth at all costs. You may lose your income in the beginning. But in the long run you are bound to be victorious. You will realise the truth of the Upanishads, "*Satyameva Jayate Na-anritam.*" Truth alone triumphs, but not falsehood. Even a lawyer who speaks the truth in law courts, who does not coach up false witnesses may lose his practice in the beginning but later on he will be honoured by the judge as well as the client. Thousands of clients will flock to him only. He will have to make some sacrifice at the outset. Lawyers generally complain "What can we do? Our profession is such. We must tell lies. Otherwise we will lose our case." These are false excuses. There is an advocate, a mental Sannyasi who is practising in the Uttar Pradesh, who is a friend and benefactor of Sannyasins, who never coaches false witnesses, who never takes up criminal cases and yet he is the leader of the bar and is revered by the judges, clients, and colleagues. O, my friends, barristers and advocates, you are killing your conscience in order to have comfortable living and to please your wife. Life here is evanescent and like a bubble. Aspire to become divine.

The various formulae—Ahimsa paramo dharmah—Non-injuring is the highest of all virtues; Satyam vada, Dharmam chara—Speak the truth and do virtuous actions—Do unto others in the same way as you wish others to do unto you—Do as you would be done by—Love thy neighbour as thy Self—are all best calculated to develop the moral aspects of a human being. Morality is the basis for the realisation of Atmic Unity or oneness of life or Advaitic feeling of sameness everywhere. Ethical culture prepares you for Vedantic realisation of “Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma—All indeed is Brahman—there is no such thing as diversity.”

All aspirants commit mistakes in jumping to Samadhi and Dhyana all at once as soon as they leave their houses without caring a bit for ethical perfection. The mind remains in the same condition although they have practised meditation for fifteen years. They have the same jealousy, hatred, idea of superiority, pride, egoism, etc. No meditation or Samadhi comes by itself when one has no ethical perfection.

9. Self-realisation, The Ultimate Meaning of Ethics

A person should finally renounce everything, without losing his vigour, finding that the whole world is not better than a dry straw, and eager to find out the essence behind all things. Of all Dharmas or ethics, the knowledge of the Self is most precious, because through that, one attains Immortality. Wishing to enter the regions of the Eternal, the wise renounce the whole world, without mercy.

Ethics is right living. Ethics leads to restraint of the lower self and thereby the mind is calmed. Through the calmness of the mind, discrimination dawns and one knows the Self in a short time. But all ethics have as their aim the realisation of the Self. This is the highest duty. This is the highest ethics. This is the highest Sadachara. This is the highest morality. This is the highest teaching. This is the highest penance.

One cannot attain to perfection by mere goodness and practice of virtue. He has to intensely meditate on the ideal with the help of purity acquired through virtue. Virtue and morality act as auxiliaries to meditation and final mergence of the individual in the Supreme. In Raja Yoga, Yama and Niyama act as ethics for perfection in Samyama. In Jnana Yoga, the Sadhana-chatushtaya acts as ethics for perfection in Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana. The Veda Samhitas act as ethics for perfection in the knowledge of the Upanishads. Grihasthadharma acts as ethics for perfection in Sannyasa, the wise portion of life. Ethics leads to wisdom of the Self, where all duties, diversely practised, find a final satisfactory explanation.

All duties, domestic, social and the like are only relative. The ultimate and chief duty of every human being is the attainment of Truth, God-realisation. The discharge of all duties is in reality to qualify man to do this highest duty.

CHAPTER II

BASIS OF ETHICS

1. Character, Conduct, Behaviour

I

Character is the essence of man. The sum total of his virtues or traits forms his character. Character is the peculiar qualities impressed by nature or habit on a person which distinguish him from others.

Man does an act. A Samskara or impression is formed in the mind. Repetition of the act goes to form a habit. A bundle of habits goes to constitute the character of a man. Every action affects the character of man.

You can deliberately build your character by cultivation of virtue. Good qualities like mercy, truthfulness, cosmic love, purity, self-control, courage, tolerance, honesty, generosity, yearning for God-realisation, serenity, discrimination, are the ingredients of good character.

II

Conduct is personal behaviour or deportment. Character expresses itself as conduct. Man has got various desires. He wills to obtain the objects of his desire. The will expresses itself in the form of an act for attaining the object of desire. The will, which is thus expressed is called conduct. Conduct is voluntary activity.

Conduct reveals the character of the man. It moulds the character also.

The guides of right conduct are the Dharma Sastras or the scriptures, the examples of saints, the Inner Self or Conscience and established usage.

Conduct is the outer expression of character. Character and conduct are inseparable from each other. Character is expressed in conduct. They act upon each other. Character is the inner side of conduct.

Conduct means the activities which adjust man to the environment. Good conduct is conducive to happiness as it brings man into harmony and concord with his surroundings and environments. Bad conduct generates pain.

III

Behaviour is the conduct of a person upon particular occasions. It is the day-to-day conduct of man, at work at any given time, play, alone, in company, at home, at school, office or outside. When a man is polite and courteous, when he is kind and sweet, when he shows respect to elders, teachers and saints, when he observes etiquette or decorum, he is called a man of good behaviour, in common parlance. External behaviour is not always a sure guide in judging a man's character. It is indeed difficult to assess character. God only knows the heart or the character of a man. Man makes mistakes in judging the character of a man. In judging a man's conduct his inner motives should be taken into consideration. Man is a very complex mysterious being. Sometimes the external mode of a man's behaviour may be misleading.

2. Basis of Conduct

It has been stated how this purposive and voluntary activity has at its back the spontaneous desire for self-expression. This desire-emotion is the basis of conduct in the fundamental sense of the term. What is at the root of this desire? A sense of incompleteness, of want of feeling of imperfection and dissatisfaction, which the individual seeks to fulfil through activity. This the Jiva feels on account of the severe limitations that yoke him to this finite physical existence and his own

forgetfulness of his essentially perfect nature. Thus this Ajnana also forms the basis of conduct. When this Ajnana is destroyed through Yoga all activity ceases as in the case of the Aptakama sage. Therefore Ajnana and the resultant feeling of imperfection and want form the basis of conduct subjective to the individual. Besides the external factors having a bearing upon conduct are natural phenomena and environment. But here the activity is more in the nature of reaction than voluntary self-initiated conduct in its primary sense. Through exercise of will man may refuse to react to these factors. Conduct is 'desire-initiated' and 'will driven.' Therefore 'desire' and 'will' form the basis of conduct.

3. Nature of Conduct

Human and sub-human life too is a process of seeking and self-expression. It is a seeking after freedom from bonds, from wants, from pain. It is a quest after harmony, 'repose,' 'peace.' It is thirst and search for happiness. By this very search and seeking man expresses his inmost nature. The true Self of man is Atman, pure Spirit. Atman is self-sufficient, full. It is Paripoorna. Therefore the human being gives expression to this essential quality of his being when he strives to be above all want. Again supreme Peace is the inherent nature of Self. 'Ayam Atma Santo' is the declaration of the intuitive seers. Man's endeavour to eliminate worry and restlessness is an attempt to express this aspect of his Self. Likewise the Self being the very embodiment of Bliss, the quest for happiness too is self-expression only. 'Anandam Brahmeti vyajanat.'

Without such self-expression the nature of a thing cannot be understood. Expression thus gives the clue to the inner nature of things. For example the quality and nature of a plant we find out through its expression in the form of flowers and fruits. In the human this innate urge, this 'Iccha' or desire to self-expression becomes manifested as 'Kriya' or activity. This is what constitutes

the nature of human conduct. Conduct is voluntary, purposeful activity. Conduct therefore is in the nature of self-expression, a self-expression manifest as active quest of happiness and freedom from want. It connotes a desire for the achievement of a certain end, the fulfilment of a purpose. The nature of conduct is seen to be voluntariness and purposiveness.

4. Ethical Discipline

The very root and the core of all moral discipline is mental purification through refraining from all evil actions and the active practice of virtue. Do good at all times. Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya symbolise these processes of avoiding sin, sticking to virtue and self-purification.

All harm arises out of man's egoism. Ego manifests as ambition, desire and lust. Under their influence man indulges in hatred, love, flattery, pride, unscrupulousness, hypocrisy and delusion. You must proceed along the path of virtue. Be determined never to swerve an inch from Dharma. The mind has to be carefully trained and the will should be developed and strengthened. Therefore much importance has been laid by the ancients upon Yama, Niyama, Shat-Sampat. The mind and will must be exercised and disciplined through deliberate act of self-denial and self-sacrifice in everyday-life. Ethical culture, therefore, demands moral vigilance and right exertion. The development of sensitive conscience and positive admiration for the goodness and nobility plays a great part in finishing ethical development.

To eradicate egoism arising out of Deha Abhimana, think constantly on the foulness and perishability of the body and the pains arising out of the senses. Reject them as evil and mentally rise above them. Dwell upon that which is desirable, elevating and Divine.

Improper action, thoughtless action without discrimination gives rise to all misery. To get freedom from misery, the noble path of virtue, truth and Sadachara is the royal way. Rigidly observe truth and purity in your thought, speech, action, in your inner motive and other conduct. Be loving, tolerant, and charitable in your opinion of man and things and in your dealings with others.

In every sphere the individual should strive to adhere to these qualities and to manifest them. Thus this ideal is to be practised between parents and children, elders and youngsters, teachers and pupils, Guru and disciples, friends and friends, leader and followers, ruler and the subjects, nation and nation.

To stick to Sadachara is difficult, no doubt mockery, misunderstanding and persecution will have to be faced. Therefore the cultivation of forbearance, meekness of spirit, calm endurance and spirit of forgiveness are of great importance. Uphold virtue at any cost, for its sake bear any calumny. Return good for evil.

5. Samanya Dharma

Samanya Dharma is the general Dharma or the general law for all men. This Dharma must be practised by all men irrespective of caste, creed, Varna and Ashrama. Goodness is the property of everyone. It is not the property of any particular caste, class or community. Every one should practise this general law and develop divine qualities.

In the Raja Yoga Philosophy Yama and Niyama have been explained as the first two Angas of Yoga-practice. These constitute non-violence, truthfulness, celibacy, non-stealing, non-covetousness, internal and external purity, contentment, austerity, etc.

As per Vishnu Samhita forgiveness, truthfulness, control of the mind, purity, practices of charity, control of the senses, non-violence, service of Guru, visiting the

places of pilgrimage, compassion, simplicity, absence of greed, worship of the gods, etc., are the essentials of Samanya Dharma for all men.

Fearlessness, cleanliness of life, steadfastness in the Yoga of wisdom, alms-giving, self-restraint, sacrifice, study of scriptures, austerity, straightforwardness, harmlessness, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, peacefulness, absence of crookedness, compassion to living beings, uncovetousness, modesty, mildness, absence of fickleness, fortitude, purity, etc., constitute Daivi Sampat as enumerated in the Bhagavad-Gita.

The virtues enumerated in the noble eightfold-path of Buddhism, and the ones prescribed by Lord Jesus in his "Sermon on the Mount" also come under the above fundamental virtues.

Your heart is harder than flint or steel as it has been the repository for the demoniacal qualities such as greed, miserliness, harshness, rudeness, anger, pride, etc. It is your foremost duty to soften the heart. You have made your heart crooked and narrow through hypocrisy, untruthfulness, backbiting, etc. It is your onerous duty to expand it now. You have rendered your heart impure through lust. You must purify it now. Only by the practice of the Samanya Dharma, by the development of the virtues you can soften your heart, expand it and purify it.

Practise Ahimsa. If you injure any other creature, you really injure yourself, because the whole world is nothing but your own self. This is Hindu Ethics.

Speak truth at any cost. The world is rooted in truth. The Dharma and all the religions of the world are rooted in truth. Practice of Ahimsa and truth constitutes the very basis and foundation of ethical life.

Food directly influences the mind. Take Sattvic food to make your mind pure. The senses are like turbulent and wild horses. The body is like the chariot. Mind is the rein. Intellect is the driver. The Atman is the Lord of the

chariot. If the senses are not kept under proper control, they will throw this chariot into a deep abyss! You will come to ruin. He who keeps the reins firm, and drives the chariot intelligently, by controlling the sense-horses, will reach the destination—the goal of life.

May you all attain eternal bliss through the practice of the cardinal virtues or Samanya Dharma!

6. Right and Wrong

All are confused on the terms right and wrong. Even the most learned men are puzzled in finding out what is right and what is wrong. Even the sages and seers find it difficult to define these terms precisely.

Lord Krishna says in the Gita: "What is action? What is inaction? As to this even the wise are deluded. Therefore I shall teach thee such action by knowing which thou shalt be liberated from evil. It is needful to discriminate action, to discriminate unlawful action and to discriminate inaction. He who seeth inaction in action, and action in inaction, is a wise man, he is a Yogi and performer of all actions"—Gita Chap. IV—16 to 18.

That which elevates you and takes you nearer to God is right; that which brings you down and takes you away from God is wrong. The actions performed in accordance with the injunctions of Sastras are right; the ones done against the principles of Sastras are wrong. To work in accordance with the Divine Will is right, to work in opposition to the Divine Will is wrong. That work which gives elevation, joy and peace of mind is right; that which brings depression, pain, restlessness is wrong. To give pleasure to others is right; to spread misery and pain to others is wrong.

Selfishness clouds understanding. Even if a man has got a tinge of selfishness he cannot find out what is right and wrong. A very pure, subtle, sharp intellect is needed for this purpose. You must possess a well purified heart. You must have a balanced mind. You

must be indifferent to heat and cold, pleasure and pain, praise and censure, success and failure. You must be well-trained in Nishkama Karma Yoga (selfless service). A pure man who has done selfless service for several years and who is doing worship of Isvara for a long time can readily find out what is wrong and what is right. He will hear his Inner Divine Voice, the voice of silence, by which he will be well guided in detecting the right and wrong.

Here is the gist of Sadachara or right conduct. "Non-injuring in thought, word and deed is the highest of all virtues." If one is perfectly established in Ahimsa in thought, word and deed, he can never do any wrong action. If one practises this very carefully he will not commit any wrong act. This is the reason why Patanjali Maharshi emphasises Ahimsa prominently in his Raja Yoga Philosophy by giving it the first place in the practice of Yama or self-restraint. Do not perform any action that brings shame and fear. You will be quite safe by following this rule.

Right and wrong vary according to circumstances, Varna and Ashrama. To kill an enemy for the protection of his subjects, is right for a Kshatriya king. To speak untruth to save the life of a Mahatma who has been unjustly charged by the unjust officer of a state, is right. Untruth has become a truth in this case. To kill a dacoit who murders the wayfarers daily, is Ahimsa only. Himsa also becomes Ahimsa in certain circumstances.

Stick to one rule or principle that appeals to your reason and conscience and follow it with faith and attention. You will evolve and reach the abode of eternal bliss. Performance of one's own duties brings happiness, quick evolution and freedom.

7. Truth

Truth constitutes the essence of the Vedas. Control over passions constitutes the essence of truth. And self-denial or refraining from the worldly enjoyments

forms the essence of self-control. These attributes are always present in a virtuous man.

Truth is the one undecaying Brahman. Truth is the one undecaying penance. Truth is the one undecaying sacrifice. Truth is the one undecaying Veda. Truth is awake in the Vedas. The fruits attached to truth have been described as the highest. From truth originate righteousness and self-control. Everything depends upon truth.

There is no penance like truth. Truth creates all creatures. Truth sustains the entire universe. It is with the help of the truth that one goes to Heaven. That which exists in the past, present and future, is truth.

Truth is the origin of creatures. Truth is their progeny. It is by truth that the world moves. It is by truth that the sun gives heat. It is by truth that the fire burns. It is on truth that Heaven rests. Truth is sacrifice, penance, Vedas, the verses of Sama, Mantra and Saranagati.

Truth is the Vedas and their branches. Truth is knowledge. Truth is the ordinance. Truth is the observance of vows and fasts. Truth is the prime syllable OM. There is truth where righteousness is. Every thing multiplies through truth.

Truth is righteousness. Righteousness is light and light is bliss. Ahimsa, Brahmacharya, purity, justice, harmony, forgiveness, peace are forms of truth.

Once upon a time truth and all religious observances were weighed in a scale. When both were weighed that scale on which truth was, proved heavier.

Harischandra practised truth. He adhered to truth at the risk of his life and attained immortality and eternal bliss and undying fame. He still lives in our hearts.

Brahman is truth. You can attain truth only by practising truth. Therefore be firm in truth. Realise the truth by practising truth.

8. Forms of Truth

Truth always exists in a pure and unmixed state. Truth is always a duty with the good. Truth is eternal duty. Truth is the greatest refuge of all. Hence respectfully bow to Truth.

Truth is duty. Truth is penance. Truth is Yoga. Truth is the Eternal Brahman. Truth is a great sacrifice. Everything depends upon truth.

Impartiality, self-control, forgiveness, modesty, endurance, goodness, renunciation, meditation, dignity, fortitude, compassion and abstention from injury are the various forms of truth.

Truth is immutable, eternal and unchangeable. It is won through Yoga. It is won through practices which do not oppose any of the other virtues.

When desire, hatred, lust and anger are annihilated, that quality by virtue of which you are able to look impartially upon one's own self and one's enemy, upon one's good and one's evil is called impartiality.

Self-control consists in never wishing for another man's property, in gravity and patience and power to remove the fears of others regarding one's own self and freedom from diseases. It is obtained through knowledge.

Devotion to liberality and the performance of all duties form goodwill. You will gain universal goodwill by continual devotion to Truth.

The quality by which an esteemed and good man puts up with both what is agreeable and disagreeable is forgiveness. You can cultivate this by the practice of truthfulness.

That quality by which an intelligent man contented in mind performs many virtuous actions and is never blamed by others, is called modesty. It is cultivated through righteousness.

That virtue which forgives for the sake of virtue and religious profit is called endurance. It is one of the forms

of forgiveness. It is gained through patience. Its object is to attain knowledge of the Eternal.

The abandoning of mundane desires and earthly possessions is renunciation. Renunciation can be obtained only by that man who is destitute of anger and malice.

That quality by which one does good with diligence and care to all creatures is goodness. It has no particular form and consists in the giving up of all selfish attainments.

That virtue by which one remains unchanged in weal and woe is called fortitude. That wise man who seeks his own well-being always practises this quality.

You should always practise forgiveness. You should be ever devoted to Truth. The wise man who can renounce joy, fear and anger can develop fortitude.

Abstention from injury to all creatures in thought, word and deed, kindness and charity are the permanent duties of the good.

All the above virtues, though seemingly different, have but one and the same form, namely Truth. All these hold up Truth and strengthen it.

It is impossible to exhaust the merits of Truth. That is the reason why the Brahmanas and the gods speak highly of Truth.

There is no duty which is higher than Truth and no sin more dreadful than untruth. Indeed, Truth is the very root of righteousness. Therefore you should never ignore Truth.

From Truth originate gifts, sacrifices with presents, the threefold Agnihotras, the Vedas and everything else which lead to righteousness.

On one occasion a thousand horse-sacrifices and Truth were weighed against each other in the balance. Truth proved heavier than a thousand horse-sacrifices.

9. Stick to Your Promise

Never break your promise. Stick to it even if it costs your life. It is better to give up your life in order to secure due performance of a sacred and solemn promise.

“Be slow to make a promise, but be quick to perform it.” This is the old adage. Say “I shall try but I do not promise you.” Do not entangle yourself by making promises thoughtlessly. Think well before you make a promise.

He who breaks his promise is not trusted by others. He who breaks his promise is censured severely by the people, as he is a liar.

He who keeps up his promise is respected by the people, He who practises truth must stick to his promise.

The vast majority of persons give all sorts of false excuses when they break their promise. This is very bad.

Suppose you have given a promise to meet a certain man at 4 p.m. on 9.7.'43 at the Town Hall; you must meet him at any cost. Even if it rains very heavily, you must not break your promise. You must not give false excuses. You must go in a car, pay any amount and meet him.

He who keeps up his promise produces a very deep impression on others. He strengthens his will-power. He attains success in all his undertakings.

Sticking to promise is a great vow. It is a great virtue. He who sticks to his promises attains great happiness here and hereafter.

10. Conscience

Conscience is a form of truth. It is the knowledge of our own acts and feelings as right or wrong. It is a sensitive balance to weigh actions. It is the faculty or principle by which we distinguish right from wrong. It is a guiding voice from within. Sense of duty is conscience. Scrupulousness is conscience. Conscience is like a silent witness and a silent teacher. It is the light of the soul that

is burning within the chambers of your heart. Conscience grows through experiences.

When you do a wrong action, the conscience pricks you. You experience pin-pricks. It says to you in a clear, small, shrill voice: "Do not do this wrong action, my friend. It will bring misery to you." A conscientious man at once ceases to act further and becomes wise.

In a wicked man, this faculty becomes dead. The sensitive nature of consciences is destroyed by sin or corruption. Hence he is not able to discriminate right from wrong.

A man of clear conscience is ever pure, joyful and cheerful. A man of guilty conscience is morose, cheerless.

Virtuous acts, charity, benevolence, nobility, generosity, acts of mercy, practice of truthfulness, Brahmacharya and Ahimsa sharpen the conscience; falsehood, cruel and immoral life, crookedness, deceitfulness kill the conscience. Certain professions, in which one has to utter deliberate falsehood daily, annihilate the conscience.

A man of pure and clean conscience sleeps happily and wakes up happily and moves about happily in this world. He attains happiness in this world and in the next world. A man of guilty conscience is ever restless and unhappy in this world and in the next world also.

Food plays an important role in the development of a pure conscience. Sattvic food helps the man to have a clean conscience. Animal food makes the conscience impure. It produces a hard crust on the surface of the conscience and blunts it totally.

A man of guilty conscience is dead even while living. A man of pure conscience is a veritable God on this earth.

Have always a clean conscience by adhering to Truth and rejoice in the Eternal Soul within.

CHAPTER III

MORALITY

1. Benefits

No Yoga, Samadhi or Kaivalya is possible without ethical perfection.

The word 'morality' comes from the root moris which means conduct.

That which is ethically good helps man to attain freedom, perfection and everlasting bliss. That which is ethically bad, brings misery, suffering and lower births to man.

Chitta-Suddhi or purification of the mind is an indispensable condition for the higher stages of the moral life.

What embodies truth, is right action; that which embodies untruth, is wrong action.

Duties are opportunities given to man to annihilate his separate self and develop a broad, universal outlook on life. The duties of Varna and Ashrama together constitute the code of relative duties, the duties of status in life, the duties obligatory on the individual in consequence of social status, temperament, specific powers and capacities. Sanatana Dharmas are the common duties of man, the duties that are obligatory on all men equally, irrespective of individual capacities, social status, nationality or creed.

Every individual should subdue his senses and give up his egoism which is the greatest evil. He should conquer pride through humility, anger through forgiveness, narrow attachment to family through universal benevolence and cosmic love. True peace and greatness lie not in self-assertion, not in individual

efforts for one's own good, but in offering oneself as a contribution to the well-being of the whole world. The practice of ethics broadens one's heart, destroys the selfishness, and makes him live for the entire universe. It brings about the reformation or regeneration of man's lower nature or the radical conversion of the inner man and shows the way to freedom or beatitude.

Innocence or Ahimsa which is not mere negative abstention but positive kindness to all creatures, charity, truth-speaking, purity in thought, word and deed and renunciation of all the worldly interests mark the good man.

Practice of ethics needs self-control. Self-control will bring happiness to yourself and others. Control of anger will help you to develop gentleness, mercy, compassion. Control of covetousness will make you generous and charitable. Control of lust will lead you to purity.

Control anger, the desire for material possessions, the lusts of the flesh, malevolence and all sorts of cravings. Only then you will be endowed with good conduct. Good conduct will lead to the attainment of highest bliss and supreme good.

May you attain Nisreyasa or the Kaivalya state of Absolute Bliss through ethical perfection.

2. Moral Obligation, Moral Sentiments

Moral judgment is always accompanied by moral obligation and moral sentiments. When you judge an action to be right, you feel under moral obligation to perform it. You have a feeling of approval. When you judge an action to be wrong, you feel under moral obligation not to perform it. You have a feeling of disapproval. The feelings of approval, disapproval, remorse or repentance, etc., are called moral sentiments.

Moral obligation is the sense of duty or oughtness. Moral obligation is not of the nature of physical compulsion. It is of the nature of 'ought' and not of the

nature of 'must.' Moral obligation is essentially self-imposed. The Self itself is the source of moral obligation. God is the source of moral obligation, Who knows not only all your actions, but also your inner motives and intentions.

Moral law is the expression of the perfection of God. It is the voice of God in man.

Moral sense or moral faculty is the capacity of the Self by which it apprehends the moral quality of an action or discriminates between rightness and wrongness. It is often called conscience. But it is something more than conscience. It is conscience plus Visuddha Buddhi or pure intellect, plus power of discrimination.

Moral ideal is infinite. Therefore, it cannot be completely realised by the vast majority of persons. A thirsting aspirant can attain this ideal. A Jivanmukta or liberated sage is an embodiment of morality. He has attained the acme or pinnacle of moral ideal. Moral progress consists in the gradual approximation to the moral ideal. The greater the moral progress, the greater the moral ideal and the deeper the sense of moral obligation.

3. Moral, Immoral and Non-Moral Actions

Morality and immorality are relative terms.

He who molests his wife frequently is more immoral than a man who occasionally visits a house of a fallen sister. He who constantly thinks of a woman and always entertains sexual thoughts is the most immoral man.

Karma is action. Akarma is inaction. Remaining in an idle state is inaction. Vikarma is forbidden action such as killing, injuring, etc. This is immoral action.

A moral action is in accordance with the injunctions of the scriptures. It is subject to the moral law. It is a virtuous action. It is consistent with what is right.

Automata and animals are neither moral nor immoral. They are non-moral.

Amoral or non-moral action is above moral rules or ordinary moral standard. The actions done by Jivanmuktas or liberated sages belong to this category. They cannot be judged by ordinary human standards. Reason and moral laws cannot penetrate there. Lord Rama's killing the Brahmana and Vali; Lord Krishna's Rasa Lila and Sri Vyasa's Niyoga in the procreation of Pandu, Dhritarashtra and Vidura are all amoral or non-moral actions.

A Jivanmukta is above all rules and prohibitions, but he will never do any immoral action. He is in full possession of the highest knowledge of Brahman or the Absolute. Whatever he does is strictly moral, in the ultimate highest sense of the term.

Subtle and deep is the path of morality. What is moral on one occasion is immoral on another occasion. A wise student should tread in the path trodden by great Mahatmas.

4. Moral Life and Moral Standard

The ethics of the Hindus is not only theoretical but also disciplinary and practical. It culminates in the philosophy of the Absolute which is the consummation of the spiritual life. It includes not merely the analysis of the will and its inner springs but also a part of practical moral Sadhana as embodied in the various practical schemes of Chitta-Suddhi or purification of mind through external and internal aids. The ethics of the Hindus always keeps in view the practical end of leading the soul beyond the empirical life to that which is non-empirical and transcendental, which bestows absolute freedom and perfect autonomy of the Self (Absolute Atma Svarajya or Kaivalya). It is here that it furnishes the strongest contrast to Western Ethics.

Ethics is the study of what is right or good in conduct. Morality implies conscious responsibility on the part of the agent for his actions. For ethics inner motives are more important than external deeds. External actions are only indicators.

Why should a man lead a moral life? Why should he not do this and not that? Because man will be no better than an animal if he does not lead a moral life. The aim of morality is to raise man to the level of Divinity by transforming his brutal nature.

Rules of conduct are prescribed by great Rishis and sages of yore like Manu, Yajnavalkya and Parasara for those baby souls who cannot think for themselves. These rules of conduct are embodied in the Smritis. You will have to lead the life according to these rules. This is moral life that will pave the way for the attainment of supreme good or Sreyas.

A right action is in accordance with a rule or law. A right action is good because it leads to the attainment of virtue. 'Bad' must be shunned as it leads to vice or evil and downfall. You will have to decide your conduct according to the standard of 'Right' and 'Good.' Right and wrong refer to the moral standard as law. Good and bad refer to it as end.

Why is truthfulness right? Because it is in conformity with the law. "Satyam Vada—Speak Truth." Why is stealing wrong? Because it is against the law, "Thou shalt not steal." Thus the moral standard is of the nature of law.

Why is it good to do acts of mercy to people who are suffering? Because it fills the heart with mercy, makes the man sympathetic, softens his heart, removes hatred and refines and ennobles his character. It helps him to develop Daivi Sampat or divine virtues and attain everlasting peace and happiness. Why is it bad to murder a man? Because the act brings him to the level of an animal, spoils his character and makes him miserable.

Thus moral judgment is passed on an action from the viewpoint of the end.

Moral life, according to Hinduism, is not merely the service of man but also of God as revealing Himself in suffering humanity. Moral life leads to life—everlasting and immortality.

There is no perfect or absolute moral standard in ethics as morality and immorality are relative terms only.

5. **Dharma Sankata**

(Quandaries in Dharma)

I

Sometimes one is puzzled as to what to do under certain circumstances. There is conflict of duty. One has to choose between alternatives both of which go against Dharma. Dharma is extremely subtle, and deep. Even sages are perplexed.

Narada appeared before Anasuya and said, "I take food only once in twelve years and that too from the person to whom the request is made. If it is refused then the Bhiksha is postponed for another twelve years. I receive only Nirvana Bhiksha."

Now Anasuya was in a great dilemma. She was in Dharma Sankata. If she gives Bhiksha naked it would endanger chastity, the true ornament of the woman. But her refusal would amount to disobeying her husband's order and violating the injunctions of Dharma Sastras with regard to Atithi Bhiksha. It would be a sin in either case. Service of an Atithi is most sacred for the householders.

But she prayed to Lord and her husband and she was miraculously saved. She sprinkled the water which was used for washing the feet of her husband on the body of Narada. Becoming naked immediately she took the plate of food and without looking at her guest she asked the guest to receive the Bhiksha. Narada was changed

into a woman by the power of chastity of Anasuya. He ran away. This is an instance of Dharma Sankata. In this case her power of chastity saved her. Anasuya acted most wisely.

II

Sometimes you will have to choose the lesser evil and you must be prepared to undergo the results of that Karma. One man's father was in a dying condition. He had no food. He was dying of starvation. The father would die if he was not given any food. Food could only be had by stealing. What is the Dharma of the son at this critical junction? To save the life of his father is his Dharma. He stole some food and saved the life of his father. He must suffer for the evil act of stealing.

III

A man was standing in a place where three roads met. He observed a black cow going fast and running along one of the roads. A little later a butcher came in pursuit of the cow and asked, "Did you see a black cow passing along this road?"

If the man told the butcher about the way the cow went, the cow would be caught and killed. If he denied having seen the cow then he would be uttering a falsehood. If he points another road, that too will be a lie. He should keep quiet.

IV

A jeweller with some jewels was passing along a road. A Brahmin knew the jeweller well. A dacoit came to the Brahmin and asked him: "Did you see the jeweller?" If he says "yes" he commits a sin. The dacoit may kill and plunder the jeweller. If he points to another road this is also a sin. If he keeps quiet the dacoit would give him a good thrashing. It is better if the Brahmin keeps quiet.

He must be prepared to receive the thrashing and even to meet death from the hands of the dacoit.

V

Ravana was doing great havoc. Although Ravana was a Brahmin, Rama killed him, in order to save the world from destruction. This is not Himsa. Killing a dacoit who is murdering many people, is no Himsa. It is Ahimsa. He who kills this dacoit, does much good to the public.

VI

There was once a hunter by name Valaka. He used to kill animals in order to support his children, wife, aged mother, father and other dependants. He never killed animals wilfully. He always spoke the truth. He was free from malice.

Valaka searched in the forest one day diligently for some animal or other, but he could not find any. At last he found a beast of prey which was drinking water. He had not seen up to that time an animal of that kind. The animal was blind but it had a very keen sense of smell. The hunter killed the animal. The moment he killed the beast, shower of flowers fell from the skies. A celestial car wherein the Apsaras were singing melodiously came down from heaven to take the hunter.

That animal had performed severe austerities in order to acquire the power to kill all animals. Brahma granted the boon, but made him blind. Valaka went to heaven because he killed the beast which had the cruel intention of killing all beings. A man by doing even a cruel act may acquire the merit of a righteous deed as Valaka did by killing the blind animal.

Morality is, therefore, very difficult to understand. The killing of the animal was a good act in this particular instance. It was not considered as Himsa (inflicting cruelty) because much good resulted by the killing of the animal. Himsa and Ahimsa are relative terms only. To an

ordinary man, Ahimsa should be the aim; but he will not fall from this principle if, out of sheer necessity and with no selfish aim, he has recourse to Himsa occasionally. One should not give leniency to the mind in this respect. If you are lenient, the mind will always take the best advantage of this and will goad you to do acts of violence. "Give a rogue an inch, he will take an ell." The mind at once adopts this policy, if you give it a long rope for its movement.

VII

There was a Brahmin named Kaushika in a village which was situated at the confluence of two rivers. He was very strict in the observance of his vows. One of his vows was, "I will ever speak the truth." Therefore he became famous as a truthful man.

Once, the people of the village were afraid of robbers. They went into the forest. The robbers tried to find them out even in the forest. The robbers approached Kaushika and said, "O truthful man! Please tell us which way these persons have passed a little while ago? Tell us if you have seen them, in the name of Truth." Kaushika told them the truth. The robbers seized the persons and killed them. Kaushika who had no knowledge of the subtleties of religion fell into a horrible hell for the grave sin of uttering the truth which should not have been uttered. Even "Truth" divorced from the principle of Ahimsa can be a source of sin as in this case!

A foolish man who is not conversant with the principles and full meaning of morality, is apt to fall into a horrible hell for not seeking the counsels of wise men to clear his doubts. All that is free from any motive of injury to any being, is surely morality, because the moral precepts have been made to free creatures from all injuries. Dharma (morality) is so called because it protects all.

If a man takes a vow for some definite purpose and if he cannot redeem the same by actions, he will not obtain the rewards of that vow.

If one's life is in danger, at marriages, or on occasions of risk to the life of one's Guru or father or relatives, anything spoken, which is far away from truth, will not be considered as falsehood. When falsehood is spoken in the cause of Ahimsa it does not amount to a falsehood. That falsehood is permitted. One must be well-versed in the real secrets of Dharma.

When one's life is at stake, or when one's entire fortunes are about to be lost or in the cause of a Brahmin, untruth may be uttered. There is no sin in uttering falsehood on these occasions. On these occasions untruth is permitted as an exception to the rule. He alone, who can distinguish between the niceties of truth and untruth can be said to be conversant with Dharma.

Because it is said one may utter falsehood on such occasions, you should not give leniency to the mind. Your ideal should be to speak the truth at all costs and not to speak falsehood even in jest. The above are exceptions when higher things are at stake, viz., the welfare of others.

VIII

What a magnanimous soul was Sibi! He was an embodiment of Dharma. He fulfilled his promise at the risk of his life. He had an extremely compassionate heart. To save the life of a pigeon, he cut off pieces of flesh from his own body. Dharma and mercy saved him, earned for him eternal fame and helped him to attain the eternal regions. He who sticks to Dharma and is merciful and who fulfils his promise, is adored by the gods. He surely attains Immortality and Eternal Bliss.

You should protect that man who has taken shelter under you. This is your Dharma. You will earn great merit like Sibi.

IX

On one occasion king Ambarisha fasted for three consecutive days. He bathed himself in the Yamuna and worshipped Vishnu at Mathura. He gave plenty of riches and cattle to Brahmanas. He first fed the Brahmanas and asked their permission to break his fast. At that time Durvasa appeared as his guest. The king received him duly and requested him to take his meals. The Rishi consented and went to bathe in the river and perform his daily rites. The king waited long for him but he did not return. There was only half a Muhurta now remaining of Dvadasi. If the king did not eat anything, his Vrata would not be observed. If he ate he would show disregard to a Brahmana. At this juncture the king decided to serve both ends by taking a little water, for the Brahmanas call that, both eating and non-eating.

X

Mark the conduct of Parasurama. He was ordered by his father Jamadagni Rishi to slay his mother. Parasurama implicitly obeyed his father's command, for he firmly believed that nothing but good could come by obedience to father. His Shraddha was immediately rewarded because the mother was brought back to life by Jamadagni. Thus if you are true to the dictates of your conscience you can solve vexing problems of Dharma Sankata.

6. Moral Judgment

Moral judgment is the moral act of discerning and pronouncing particular actions to be right or wrong, good or bad. It compares the action with the moral standard, and thus judges whether the voluntary action is in conformity with it or not. The moral standard is kept before the mind and applied to the cases under consideration. It is a judgment upon an action with reference to the moral ideal. It is a judgment upon

conduct, the judgment that such and such conduct is right or wrong.

There is a subject who judges. There is an object that is judged. There is a standard according to which the action is judged. There is the moral faculty of judging (conscience).

Moral judgment is passed only upon conduct. It is not passed upon all sorts of actions. Voluntary actions and habitual actions are objects of moral judgment. Non-voluntary actions are excluded.

The motive is the idea of the end chosen by the person. It is a part of intention. Intention is wider than motive. Intention includes the ideas of the chosen end and ideas of the chosen means, agreeable or disagreeable, pleasant or unpleasant and also the foreseen consequences of the action.

Sometimes the motive is quite good, but the consequences turn out to be bad. For example, a dexterous surgeon performs an operation with intense care in order to cure a patient, but the patient dies despite his best efforts. The motive is good in this instance, but the consequence is bad. The action of the surgeon cannot be considered as bad, because his motive is good.

Sometimes the motive is bad but the consequence turns out to be good. A mischievous man threw a rupee on the head of a beggar in order to cause injury, but the beggar picked the rupee and bought some rice and dhal. Here the action is wrong, though the consequence is good, because the motive is bad.

Sometimes the end chosen is good, but the means employed for the attainment of the end are bad. A man steals some money and feeds the poor. Here his motive is good, but the means adopted are immoral. Therefore the action is wrong. We cannot regard his conduct as right. An action is right if both the motive or the end and the

means are good. An action is wrong if either of them is bad.

We pass moral judgment on the character of a man when we want to determine his moral worth or moral excellence. We do not determine the moral quality of an action of a man by considering the character of the man, for a man of good character has not always a good intention and a man of bad character may not have necessarily a bad intention always. You are far from right if you maintain that character is the object of moral judgment though in actual life it frequently weighs as an influencing factor in such judgment. The moral quality of an action is always determined by the intention of the actor.

Moral judgment is extremely difficult. It demands a pure, subtle, sharp intellect or very pure conscience. Even a slight tinge of selfishness or impurity will mar the moral faculty that passes the judgment. He who is leading a pure moral and divine life will be able to pass a correct, moral judgment. A Jivanmukta or liberated sage only can pass a correct moral judgment.

7. Moral Standard and Judgment

This inevitable relativity of morality has made it difficult to have any right or definite moral standard. Everyone's actions and all occurrences cannot be assessed by single fixed standard. The actions of a soldier in a battlefield cannot be judged by the same standard of morality applicable to a layman in civic life. Nor will a similar action of the self-same soldier be of the same nature if repeated at home during peacetime. Materialists and critics seek to take advantage of this seeming lack of any uniformity of moral standard and level the charge that there is no reliable moral standard at all. This is a mistake. This is due to mere superficial view without insight. Behind the variety and difference in matters of detail, there is a unity of principles

underlying. There is a uniform fundamental universal moral law for all times.

This law, some stated as the promotion of human happiness and welfare. Others put it as "The greatest good of the greatest number." Certain Westerners like Berkeley and Hume held that as moral which contributed to the pleasure of man and cancelled pain. But they modified it by saying that it was not sensuous pleasure that was meant. It was a rational and a higher type of pleasure. But they all went on the assumption of the solid reality of the World. The seers of the East had evolved the law upon a distinctively spiritual basis. In trying to fix a standard, you should bear in mind that ethics and morality are part of life. Therefore, they should be conducive to the attainment of the highest ultimate purpose of life. It is conclusively established that Self-realisation, the attainment of the Infinite, Eternal State of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss is the Summum Bonum of life. Thus in the absolute sense, that which helps to attain the Summum Bonum conforms to the eternal ethical law. There is no ideal that is an ideal by itself finally, but is subordinate to the highest ideal, Self-realisation, the attainment of freedom and eternal life.

They too said that bestowal of happiness was the test of morality of an action. But this happiness was not worldly happiness. All worldly happiness is evanescent. It is not unalloyed. It also causes a reaction of misery. True happiness is the Eternal and Infinite. "Yo Vai Bhuma Tat Sukham." But this criterion is transcendental. But this vision of the ancient seers found a means of reconciling this with the life of man on the relative plane. How? The sacrifice of all selfish interest and the dedication of life to others' good, form therefore the backbone of ethical life. Because "Isaavasyam Idam Sarvam." The ethical was summed up in "Sarva-Bhuta-Hite Ratah." The Lord declared "He is dear to me" who "Yo Mam Pasyati Sarvatra."

Thus it was found that there was a happy concordance between ethical living and the highest good. Thus morality became necessary and desirable for it was the pathway to Blessedness. The rationale and the sanctions of ethics are the indispensability of ethical living for the realisation of the highest goal of life and the proved fact of the inevitability of retribution that descends on one who goes against the moral law. We see how this unwritten law operates everywhere in this world. Sacrifice being the keynote, we find that ideals of duty hold sway over ideals of rights. The parents sacrifice their personal comforts and pleasure for the welfare of their children. The son sets aside all considerations of personal advantage in serving his parents and obeying their dictates implicitly. The chaste wife dedicates her life to unostentatious, self-effacing service of her Lord. The ideal householder subordinates his selfish intent in helping all creatures disinterestedly. The Sannyasin dedicates his entire life for Visuddha Seva. The ruler takes all the burden of protecting his subjects and exposes himself to a thousand perils on that account.

This then is the ultimate moral standard—whether directly or indirectly, any given line of conduct serves to promote the highest goal.

Now quite apart from the question of moral standard, there are certain actions which cannot be adjudged from any moral standpoint at all. There are actions that cannot be classified either as moral or immoral. Even after accepting some conventional moral standard, more or less generally applicable, these actions stand outside the sphere of recognised moral law. They are the reflex actions which are merely responses to external stimuli,—actions done by children and idiots and by those whose intellects are not fully developed and those by the Sages who have merged their individual wills in the Cosmic Will.

It has been explained how a moral agent is responsible for his actions and how his individual will

should control and guide the effects of his actions on the social health and happiness. In other words the moral worth of an action consists in the free-will and choice of the agent and if that action contributes towards the social health and happiness, it is called a moral action. If the action retards or destroys the social good, then it is known as immoral. In either case it is presumed that the agent is of a fully developed intellect capable of comprehending the full consequences of his actions.

To these actions the standards of morality cannot be applied and the actions adjudged by man. The former—by children and undeveloped or defective intellects are due to subnormal causes in that the Buddhi which is the instrument of moral perception is either not developed fully or defective from birth. Refer Code of Manu—how the actions of children below 13 should not be questioned in the courts of justice. In the latter cases, viz., in the cases of Sages, they have renounced the realisation of the moral self in favour of something higher viz., the realisation of the Spiritual or Cosmic Self and when that merging of the Will takes place, the Cosmic Will takes up the control and guidance of the individual organism. The Cosmic Will has no preference for the social good or the opposite but guides the organism according to the residual Prarabdha Vasanas still in deposit in the subconscious mind at the time of merging of the individual will in the Cosmic Will. Hence those actions cannot come under the moral judgment of man and they are classified as non-moral as they do not have the backing of a fully developed individual will in the former kind of cases and complete absence of the individual will in the latter kind of cases. Thus when you are reading the biographies of realised Sages, you may come across several actions which do not fit into the moral standards. Undeveloped Sadhakas quote them as examples and act in a similar style. They foolishly think that they are justified morally as they have got such an action of a realised Sage. They do not,

for a moment, consider that they still have their individual wills planning for their future. For example one man utilised some Government money in his charge for the feeding of his famished family, quoting the example of Sri Ram Das. How foolish he is! A highly developed moral man alone is competent and can assess the worth or otherwise of others' actions. An ordinary man will go wrong in many instances. A sage alone will be impartial in his judgment.

8. Crime and Punishment

Violation of the moral law constitutes a moral evil.

Vice is a stain of character. It is a flaw of character. It is a blemish or fault. It issues as sins and crimes. Vice issues in evil deeds which are called sins.

Sin is an evil deed. Sin is wilful violation of laws of morality and religion. It is transgression of the law of God. According to Vedanta there is no such thing as sin. According to Vedanta sin is only a mistake or error committed by a baby soul who is weak and ignorant.

Crime is an offence against society which is recognised by natural law and which is liable to punishment. All sins are not crimes. That sin which is punishable by the Government is called a crime. Theft is a crime. But ingratitude is a sin. It cannot be punished by the Government.

The rod of chastisement should be raised by the State in order to keep law and order.

He who does a crime lowers himself in the scale of moral perfection. The aim of punishment is to educate or reform the culprit himself.

Another view is that a criminal must be punished to defend the supremacy and authority of the moral law. The moral law is broken by the criminal. Justice demands that he should be punished. If the criminal is not punished the moral law loses its authority, majesty

and dignity. Crime is a breach of the moral order of the society.

Punishment should be inflicted according to the character of the offence under particular circumstances. The circumstances which lessen the force of punishment are the age of the criminal, his intention, and provoking circumstances.

The capital punishment of hanging appears to be a relic of the barbarous age. This should be stopped. There is no scope for improvement and reformation of the culprit.

Sin is expiated by self-punishment such as fasting Krichhra and Chandrayana Vratas, Japa, meditation, and repentance with a contrite heart.

May this world become once more the reign of Lord Rama, or 'Rama Rajya,' where there can be neither crime nor punishment and all will be virtuous.

CHAPTER IV

CONDUCT OF RIGHT LIFE

(DIVINE LIFE)

1. Virtue and Virtuous Life

1. Virtue

Virtue looks very beautiful when acquired and added to a virtuous behaviour like the dye on a white garment.

Absence of malice and truthfulness are most beneficial to all creatures. Absence of malice constitutes the chief virtue which is founded upon truth.

Truth is the supreme virtue which is specially adopted by the pious. Good behaviour forms the peculiar virtue of the honest and the wise.

Justice constitutes virtue.

Every man frames principles of his own according to his inherent tendency.

Giving away food incessantly to the best of one's ability, patience, firm belief in virtue, necessary regard for all creatures always—these virtues are present only in that person who has wholly abandoned all worldly pleasures.

No person is found on earth who shines with all the excellent qualities.

A person who was formerly virtuous, having committed sins out of ignorance, can destroy those sins afterwards. The virtue of persons shines again, if sins are committed out of mistakes.

Pious behaviour is most wonderful, ancient, unchangeable and eternal. Good behaviour forms the important attribute of the pious.

Rendering service to the superiors, truthfulness, wrathlessness and charity are ever present in those who are really virtuous.

You can obtain great merit by directing your heart towards virtuous behaviour.

Truth constitutes the essence of the Vedas. Control over passions constitutes the essence of truth. Self-denial or refraining from worldly enjoyments forms the essence of self-control. These attributes are always present in a man of virtuous conduct.

2. Virtuous Man

He is considered to be virtuous who never shows wrath, pride or haughtiness and malice and whose conduct is ever marked by simplicity and serenity.

He is said to possess virtuous conduct who carefully follows the rites laid down in the Vedas, who is holy, who possesses piety and sacred character, who serves the superiors and who has the power of restraining the self.

Forgiveness, truthfulness, simplicity, sacredness are the characteristics of virtuous conduct.

Those who are kind to all creatures and who are never malignant, who never speak ill of anybody, who are familiar with the fruits of evil and good deeds, are regarded to be virtuous.

Those who are just and well-disposed towards all, who are honest, who possess sacred character, and constantly tread in the path of virtue, who are liberal in charity, who are unselfish, who show favour to the distressed, who possess the wealth of knowledge, who are devotees, who are kind to all creatures, are virtuous persons.

A virtuous man gives alms even at the denial of the comforts of his wife and dependents.

He who is holy, possesses good conduct.

The actions and behaviour of great men are difficult of acquisition.

The sins of those men who are made pure by means of their own virtuous actions, die out of themselves.

The fool cannot shine in this world only by praising himself. The learned man, even if he be dirty and unanointed, shines gloriously in this world.

A virtuous man speaks ill of none; nor does he utter his own praise.

Sacrifice, charity, austerity, the study of the Vedas and truthfulness are always found in a man of virtuous conduct.

Having control over desires, anger, haughtiness, avarice and wickedness, those who take pleasure in virtue because it is virtue, are really regarded to be virtuous.

3. Benefits of a Virtuous Life

He who is virtuous, who is kind on all occasions, who is filled with compassion, obtains the greatest contentment and ascends the superior path of virtue.

Harmlessness, forgiveness, peacefulness, contentment, agreeable speech, control of passions and excitements, the service of virtuous people, actions done in accordance with the injunctions of the sacred scriptures, constitute the superior path of the honest and the wise.

He who constantly follows the path of virtue and daily worships the virtuous, can reach the eternal abode of wisdom. Only he is freed from that greatest terror of rebirth.

The wise men who with sanctity lead a virtuous life, obtain eternal bliss and immortality.

Those who are charitable, secure prosperity in this world and abode of happiness in the next.

Those who are virtuous and are devoted to the observance of the vows, to the Srutis and to self-denial, those who have ascended the path of virtue and are engaged in speaking truth and observing virtues, those who are endowed with the virtuous behaviour, who follow the orders of their preceptor, who minutely observe the injunctions of the scriptures obtain the highest wisdom, eternal bliss and immortality.

4. Vice

The vicious man who cannot restrain his own self becomes subject to these vices, viz., desire, wrath, etc.

Evil behaviour constitutes sin.

By committing a crime you become wicked and dishonest. Those who consider that there is no virtue or those who laugh at the pure and good are ruined in the long run. The sinful person who desires to commit a crime is slain by himself.

If you repent for your sins, you are freed from them. If you declare that you would not commit the sin again, you are delivered from committing a second one.

You may be saved from sin by the performance of the acts which are ordained by the sacred scriptures.

The gods behold one's sin, as also the Indweller or the silent Witness.

Temptation forms the groundwork of all sins. Ignorant men yield to temptations and commit sins.

Those deluded souls who hate virtues surely tread in the sinful path. They fall in the abyss of decay.

5. Sadhana

Do not offend anybody. Be charitable. Speak the truth always.

Cross over the ocean which is replete with the crocodiles of desires and sharks of temptations, by means of the boat of endurance and right conduct.

Take shelter under wisdom and always worship those who are virtuous.

A person being born bad may be of good character. Again he may turn out virtuous, even if he be very wicked, when he is in the company of the sages.

Abandon falsehood. Do good to all without being asked. Never abandon virtue out of lust or anger or malice.

Do not express unnatural joy at good fortune, or succumb under calamities. Do not grow dispirited when overpowered by poverty or abandon the virtues when so overpowered.

If you commit a wrong on a certain occasion, you should not commit it again. You should direct yourself to what contributes to the happiness of others.

There should be no wrong over wrong. Deal honestly with others.

2. Who Is Good and Virtuous?

He who has no liking for what is agreeable and no dislike for what is disagreeable, who practises self-restraint, who regards pleasure and pain as same, who injures no creature, destroys no life, is considered as good and virtuous.

He who is devoted to the well-being of all, who can give his all and sacrifice his very life for others, who is endowed with great courage, who follows all the duties laid down by the scriptures, who is a universal benefactor, who is ever ready to work for the well-being of others, who has truth for his refuge, who gives but does not take, who has mercy, who adores elders, past as well as present, gods and guests, who fears no obligation of returning to this world after death, who has no fear of the next world, to whom good conduct is always dear, is regarded as good and virtuous.

Such a promoter of virtue cannot be seduced from the path of virtue.

He is perfectly fearless. He is tranquil, serene. He is mild. He always follows the right path. He is full of mercy. He is always adored by the good.

He is free from lust and anger. He is not attached to any worldly object. He has no pride. He observes excellent vows. He always commands respect.

He never acquires virtue for the sake of wealth or fame. He acquires it only because he knows it as a duty like that of supporting the body.

Fear, anger, restlessness and sorrow do not live in him. He carries no external garb of religion for misleading his neighbours and fellow-men. He observes no mystery.

He is perfectly contented. He has no error of judgment originating from covetousness. He always follows truth and sincerity. He never deviates from righteousness.

He is never overjoyed at any acquisition or pained at any loss. He is not attached to anything. He is free from pride. He is ever devoted to the quality of goodness. He regards all impartially.

Gain and loss, happiness and misery, the agreeable and the disagreeable, life and death are held in equal estimation by that man of firm mind engaged in acquiring divine knowledge and treading the path of tranquillity and righteousness.

O Man! Always respect such a good and virtuous man. Serve him and seek instructions from him.

Keep your senses under control. Do not yield to carelessness. Adore him who bears such love for virtue. You will attain eternal happiness.

3. Charity

Prof. Ramakrishna, M.A., Ph.D., gave a blanket in charity to a poor man. He afterwards thought, "I ought not to have given him a blanket." His heart was in a state of agitation and agony. He wanted to get the blanket back from the poor man. If you do such kind of charity, you will not derive any benefit. You will not get purity of heart. Many worldly-minded people perform charitable acts of this description only. This world abounds with such charitable persons.

Miserliness is a great curse. It is an enemy of oneness and a friend of selfishness. Miserly persons are quite unfit for the spiritual path. Generous-hearted persons are very rare. Many have achieved power, popularity, peace and happiness only through a generous heart. Miserly persons can never dream to have all these and get success in life. Their very company is very dangerous for spiritually-minded persons. They poison the whole atmosphere on account of their corrupted, contracted hearts.

Charity must be spontaneous and unrestrained. Giving must become habitual. You experience extreme joy in giving. You must not think, "I have done a very charitable act. I will enjoy happiness in heaven. I will be born as a rich man in the next birth. This charitable act will wash away my sin. There is no charitable man like me in my town or district. People know me that I am a very charitable man." Bragging is mean and deplorable.

You should have a very large heart. You should throw money like stones to the poor people. Then only you can develop Advaitic feeling, Samadhi and cosmic love. The majority of householders are absolutely selfish in these days. Money is their blood. You will find cheerlessness and ugliness in their faces. Worry, greed, passion, jealousy, hatred, depression and all other evil qualities stick to the man who has the miserly nature in him and they consume the very core of his heart. It is a

pity that even the judges and Zamindars fight with porters on the railway platform for the sake of an anna.

If a miserly man keeps Rs. 50,000 he will not enjoy the money but crave for a lakh more. A millionaire will be craving to become a multi-millionaire. It is horrible to find that rich persons are so miserly and hard-hearted that they do not like to share with their own friends some of their rich delicacies. They will keep nice cakes in the almirah under lock and key and eat them in the night when others have gone to bed. Such persons will not give even a pie in charity. They will be eating nice food, but, they will never have a heart to give even a minor portion to a poor man who is starving for three days. Such is the nature of their hard heart. They will take nice, fresh cow's milk and offer only diluted milk to their servants. They will take fresh, rich articles of food and offer the useless preparations to their servants after keeping them for three days. They will wait for three days for getting a good opportunity to use the old preparations of food and then throw them to their servants with a painful heart. They do not like to part with these decaying things also. You will find such heart-rending instances in almost all the houses of rich persons.

Some officers retire from service and live on the banks of the Ganga, Narmada and Yamuna. They do a little Japa and meditation and study Yoga-Vasishtha and Upanishads and imagine that they are Jivanmuktas. They entertain intense Moha for their children. They remit their pension to their sons and grandchildren.

They will not spend even a pie in charity. They are the embodiments of miserliness. They are hopeless, self-deluded souls! A miser cannot dream of Self-realisation even in thousand births. Lord Jesus says: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God."

Some people do charity and are anxious to see their names published in the newspapers with their photos. This is a Tamasic form of charity. This is no charity at all.

Lord Jesus says: "The left hand should not know what the right hand is giving." You should not advertise about your charity and charitable nature. There must not be an exaltation in your heart when people praise your charitable nature.

If one can destroy miserly nature, a great portion of Sadhana is over. He has achieved something substantial. Sins can be destroyed by the charity. Lord Jesus says: "Charity covereth a multitude of sins." In the Gita (Chap. XVIII-5) you will find: "*Yajno Daanam Tapaschaiva Paavanaani Maneeshinaam*," "Yajna, charity and austerity are the purifiers of the intelligent."

You should be thirsting to do charitable acts daily. You should not lose any opportunity. You should create opportunities. There is no Yoga or Yajna greater than Sattvic charity of spontaneous type. Karna, Raja Bhoja did countless charitable acts. So, they still live in our hearts.

Develop this Udaara-vritti. Then you can become a King of kings. If you give, the whole wealth of the world is yours. Money will come to you. This is the immutable, inexorable, unrelenting law of nature. Therefore give. Give. See God everywhere. Share with all. The best major portion must be given to others. Destroy the ingrained miserliness. Your heart will expand. You will have broad outlook on life. You will have a new, wide vision. You can feel the help from the Indweller of the heart. You can experience an indescribable thrill of divine ecstasy and spiritual bliss. This will give you tremendous inner strength. Your footing in the spiritual path will be firm. You will become a modern Buddha.

Give to the poor, the sick, the helpless and the forlorn. Give to the orphans, the decrepit, the blind, the helpless widows. Give to the Sadhus, Sannyasins,

religious and social institutions. Charity should be bestowed with respect, humility and joy. You should feel that you are highly honoured in getting an opportunity to be of service to another. You must feel that you are the receiver. Thank the man who gives you an opportunity to serve him by doing charity. Give with right mental attitude, and realise God through charitable acts. Glory to those who do charity with the right spirit.

4. Annadana Yajna

Annadana or distribution of food to Brahmanas, Sadhus, Sannyasins, guests and the poor, is the highest form of charity. It purifies the heart of the aspirant, and prepares the aspirant for the descent of the divine light and grace. The donors and those who organise such laudable works and those who serve are immensely benefited. They all experience inexpressible joy and bliss, and supreme satisfaction. Even if you give enormous wealth to a person, it will not give satisfaction, but if you give food, the recipient is perfectly satisfied. Have you not studied the Nakulopakhyana in Mahabharata? The mongoose rolled on the ground where the Brahmin guest's feet were washed. Half of the body was turned into gold.

India is the only holy land on the surface of this earth which is famous for its distribution of alms. Hindus always cherish an ardent desire for distribution of food. To give food for a guest or a poor man or a Sadhu is Atithi Yajna or highest sacrifice for them. They will not take their food before giving food to the guest. Guest is Lord Vishnu for them. They will search for a guest before they take food. Not only this, they give food first to the cows, birds and fishes and then they take food. They distribute rice even to the ants. Distribution of food is one of the items of Pancha Maha Yajna, the five great sacrifices.

The glory of the Annadana cannot be adequately described in words. A Hindu will even starve himself and give what little he has to the poor and the needy. This is

his inborn nature. Lord Krishna says in the Gita: "Giving of alms is the great purifier of the heart."—Chap. XVIII-5. "The impious who cook food for their own sake verily eat sin."—Chap. III-13.

5. Glory of Annadana

In ancient days there was no one in this holy land of ours who died on account of starvation. India is the storehouse of material and spiritual food from time immemorial. There was never scarcity of food. Food could be secured for the mere asking. Annadana is a great sacrifice. It is one of the best forms of charity.

Every householder should feed at least one hungry man who comes to his house before he takes his daily meal. This is Atithi-Pujanam. A guest is a visible representative of God. The Upanishads declare, "Atithi-Devo Bhava." May the guest be your God. Our ancient Rishis parted with their own share of food for the sake of guests. Kindly go through the Nakulopakhyana in the Mahabharata. A Brahmana who lived on alms sacrificed all the food that was prepared in the house to satisfy the guest. His wife, son, grandchildren, all gladly sacrificed their share of food to please the guest though they were themselves starving for four days. Look at the spirit of self-sacrifice of the whole family! These ideas were ingrained in men from their very childhood.

Even now in many places in India Annadana is conducted on a large scale. There are many institutions which feed hundreds and thousands of pilgrims, Sadhus and the poor every day.

India is a country very famous for charity. Every individual depends upon food for maintenance of his life. The physical body is kept up by the food that we take. It grows on food and dies without it. The benefits of Annadana are beyond description. It is equal to giving life to a dying man.

On being questioned by Raja Yudhishthira, Bhishma said, "O King, verily there is no charity like that of giving food. It bestows merits both in this and the other worlds. Devas and the Rishis have praised Annadana much. The life of every being is fixed on food. Therefore one should by all means pay special attention to giving of food."

"Every activity in this world depends upon food. Strength of a strong man, good conduct, contemplation, sacrifice, virtuous acts—are all done through the power of food. If one does not take food all these acts of virtue will dwindle away. A man accrues strength, splendour, fame, happiness and glory in the three worlds by giving food. Prajapati has said that food is nectar."

The Agni Purana says: "Food is the source of Dharma (righteousness), Artha (wealth), Kama (accomplishment of desire) and Moksha (liberation)." Skanda Purana says: "The child in the womb, the new-born child, a young boy, a youth, an old man, a god, a Rakshasa, an ascetic, all require food. In every living being hunger is the worst disease and the medicine to treat that disease is food. The giver of food is the giver of life. One achieves the fruit of the charities by giving food."

Vishnudharmottara Purana says: "In giving food one need not look into the rules regarding time, place and the person qualified to receive the charity. A dog, a Chandala, a worm, a bee, a cow—all should be fed. In short, all living beings can be given food."

Brahmanda Purana says: "Blood, flesh, semen, etc., are formed stage by stage out of food. From the sperm takes place the birth of beings. This world is manifestation or expression of food. This body is food itself. For a hungry man, gold, jewels, elephants, horses, flowers, garlands, sandal-paste, etc., have no value. He would prefer only a plate of food when he is hungry. He will reject gold, silver, horses even though offered in

plenty. There is no pain, no disease greater than hunger. Therefore food should be given freely in charity."

Nandi Purana says: "By giving away even one morsel of food man attains heaven." Likhita Smriti says: "As many number of morsels of food that is given to a hungry man, the benefits of so many Asvamedha Yajnas (horse sacrifices) the giver of the food acquires."

In the Bhagavad Gita you will find, "*Annad Bhavanti Bhutani*—from food come forth beings." The Taittiriya Upanishad lays great stress on the importance of food. It says, "All beings that exist on earth are born of food. Then they live by food, then again to the food they go at the end. So verily food is the oldest of all creatures. Therefore it is called the medicament of all."

Food is the medicament for all which can cool the body and allay the scorching hunger of all beings.

Food should be treated with great respect. Food should not be looked upon with contempt. Food is God. While taking food one should not pass remarks like, "This is not nicely prepared. There is much salt in the vegetable. Brinjal is not good. Rice is useless. This food is burnt. It is smoky" and so on. One should be happy when he takes food. He should avoid all unpleasant and unholy thoughts and speech while taking food. Then only his digestive system will work properly and his health will be unimpairing.

The giver of food is considered as father. The Dharma Sastras say, "One who causes impregnation, he who initiates one with the sacred thread and the Gayatri Mantra, the teacher who imparts knowledge, one who feeds, one who gives protection from fear—all these should be considered as fathers." From this you can infer the importance of giving food.

Food should be given with respect and humility. You should not expect the fruits of your charity. Some people do Annadana for the sake of getting a son, wealth or promotion. They will get all these. But this is Rajasic

charity. Food should be given without any consideration of time, place and the qualifications of the recipient free from expectation of results. This is Sattvic charity or the highest form of charity.

If you store food more than your actual requirements you are a thief. You deserve punishment. Offer food to the Lord before you eat.

Even though there is scarcity of foodstuffs, people who can afford to spare should distribute food to the poor and needy. You can feed many poor people and save them from starvation and death. Some religious work or social work can be started by you if you can afford to and those who work for it can be fed. This is also a kind of charity.

There are some people who are shy to beg from others. They consider begging to be mean. So food should be given to people by studying the requirements of the poor and needy.

Two meals daily are essential for every man. Only when man is above wants in respect of food all acts of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha can be pursued by him. Even spiritual Sadhana cannot be undertaken if there is no food.

Follow the principle, "Eat to live and not live to eat." Let your attention be turned not to storing of food and enjoying the luxuries of life. If you are a whole-timed spiritual student who has given up all work and taken to pure Japa and meditation you can live on one meal a day. You will be free from diseases and your mind will be calm and serene. When you sit for meditation in Brahmanuhurta you will merge in Brahman.

When king Bali, Sri Rama, Yudhishthira and others ruled the country there was no starvation at all. No one died for want of food. They looked to the comforts of their subjects. They allotted to each man work in such a way that everyone could get his daily food. Unfertile lands were made fertile by efficient and potent means and the

production of food was increased. There was plenty, peace and prosperity during their reign.

It is a great sin to sell food. The Sastras have condemned this act. He is no better than the seller of wine.

Cooked rice, vegetables, etc., are put in a vessel and hung on tree-branches or kept on house-tops for birds and vultures. Food is given to dogs, monkeys, cows and other animals. Rice, grams, sugar, etc., are spread on the corners of the rooms for the ants. Balls are made of wheat flour and thrown in water for fishes. All these come under Bhuta Yajna—or sacrifice to animals. This is one of the five sacrifices of a householder.

In Punjab, Sindh and other places people go for a walk early in the morning and when they go they take with them bread prepared on the previous night. They feed the poor beggars, stray dogs, cows, etc., that wander about in the streets. There are many choultries in South India for feeding pilgrims. In Northern India they are called Annakshetras. In South India almost all temples have choultries attached to them and the devotees who go for Darshan and Bhajan in the temples are fed in the choultry.

Rich people contribute lump sums for the maintenance of choultries and Annakshetras where hundreds are fed daily. Thus in the past and in the present as well, distribution of food to the hungry has been a unique feature in our country. That is the reason why India is known as Dharmakshetra or Dharmabhumi (a land of charity).

Every festival of Hindus is famous for its distribution of food. In marriages, thread ceremonies, anniversary ceremonies, annual festivals of religious importance like Holi, Deepavali, Janmashtami, birthdays of great men, Sankramana, etc., hundreds and thousands of men are fed. Any occasion of joy and happiness is celebrated with bounteous distribution of food to the Brahmins, Sadhus

and the poor. Every Anushthana, religious observance and austerity is concluded by a good distribution of food. Every Hindu holds distribution of food as one of the chief items of charity. He gives food even to his enemy when he is hungry. Such is the glory of Annadana.

In Melas like Haridwar Kumbha Mela, Allahabad Kumbha Mela, food is served in abundance to those who need it. No distinction of caste, creed or colour is made. Everyone who is hungry gets food.

Annadana purifies the heart of the giver. One who does charity of food indiscriminately, who takes delight in feeding others, develops cosmic love or universal brotherhood. He feels that the Lord is seated in the hearts of all and feeds the hungry. This pious mental attitude, that he is feeding the Lord, helps to purify his mind very quickly. Our Rishis of yore had this mental attitude when they served the guests.

Ambarisha, Draupadi, Lord Krishna have all taught us this sublime philosophy of Atithi Pujanam.

It is this mental Bhava that helps a man to purify his heart very quickly. All acts done with divine Bhava become divine activities. That is real Yoga.

Glory to India, the land of charity! May she continue her divine activities for ever! May the inhabitants of this glorious Aryavarta live up to the ideals of their forefathers, the Rishis of yore! May Annadana ever flourish! May rains come in proper time! May the earth yield plenty! May peace, prosperity, and joy be to all beings! May knowledge of the Self dawn in you all!

6. Penance

He who eats forbidden foods such as meat, fish, eggs, etc., is a wilful man. He who eats the holy remnants of sacrifices obtains children and ascends to heaven.

The practice of humility and renunciation of fruits of actions form the highest penance. It is superior to all kinds of penances. He who performs such penance is

regarded as one who is always fasting and who is always leading a life of Brahmacharya (celibacy). He becomes a worshipper of gods and guests. He is regarded as one who always lives on sacrificial remnants.

He who eats once during the day and once during the night at the fixed hours, without eating anything in the interval is regarded as one who is always fasting.

He who visits his wife only in her season and never at other times is considered as a Brahmachari.

By abstaining from sleep during the day he will become one who is always wakeful.

He who always eats after having fed his guests and servants becomes an eater of nectar. He who never eats till gods and guests are fed acquires by such abstention heaven itself. He is said to live upon sacrificial remnants, who eats only what remains after feeding the gods, servants and the guests. Such men attain numberless blessed regions.

He who shares his food with the gods, and the Pitrus passes his days always happily with his sons and grandsons and in the end attains a very high state after casting off his body.

Sleeping on the bare ground without pillow is also penance. It is a good self-punishment also.

Fasting destroys sins and purifies the heart. It is also a penance.

The practice of Krichhra Vrata and Chandrayana Vrata is a good purifier. It is an expiatory act for the removal of sins. It is a severe form of penance.

7. Friendship (*Maitri*)

Have you not heard the story of Damon and Pythias? A friend in need is a friend indeed. A true and sincere friend is the greatest benefactor.

Friendship should never be broken. It must be kept up through the end of life. Broken friendship cannot be cemented by any means.

The one true immortal sincere friend is the Lord within, thy Indweller. Bow to Him. Meditate on Him daily. All other friends will leave you but this Immortal Friend will be ever true to you.

It is very difficult to find a sincere friend in this world. People are united for selfish ends. When one cannot achieve his desired object from another, the friendship is broken.

No person should injure a friend. He who injures a friend sinks into dreadful and everlasting hell. Everyone should be grateful and everyone should try to do good to his friends. Everything may be got from friends. Honours may be got from friends.

From friends one may enjoy various objects of life. By the exertion of friends you may escape from various sorts of danger and distress. He who is wise should honour his friends to the best of his power.

An ungrateful, shameless and sinful wretch should be shunned by the wise. He who injures his friends is a man of despicable character. Such a sinful person is the vilest of men.

Cultivate true lasting friendship. Never break it. Give up selfishness. Adapt. Serve. Do not expect anything. Only then you will have lasting friendship with all.

8. Be Sweet

Really sweet people are rarely found in this universe. Though sweetness is a feminine virtue, yet it is not found in females also. Most of the females are harsh and gall-hearted though their speech appears to be sweet for the time being. A businessman, a lawyer, a doctor and a sister of ill-fame are all apparently sweet till they get money from their clients. This is not natural, lasting,

beneficent, elevating sweetness. It is false, glittering. It is commercial or mercenary.

A really sweet man is divine. He does not expect anything from others. His very nature is sweet. He brings joy to others by his innate sweetness.

Sweetness is born of Sattva. It is the sweet potent, divine, golden residuum after Rajas and Tamas have been squeezed out through protracted Yoga Sadhana. It is the concentrated quintessence of Sattva. It is the sweet aroma of a perfected Soul, Siddha Purusha, adept or Arhata through long and intense Tapas, discipline, Yoga practice and communion through mind-melting in silence.

Sweetness must be an essential attribute of a spiritual propagandist and public worker. Without possessing this virtue, no propagandist can turn out efficient and solid work. He who wants to establish a Mutt or Ashram or spiritual institution, must possess this ennobling virtue. All public workers and Ashramites must equip themselves with this divine quality.

The Rajasic ego should melt in the crucible of Yoga fire. Then this golden sweetness will shine in its glory. Rajas must be churned out. Then the butter of sweetness will float on the surface of the Sattvic mind.

Be sweet in speech. Be sweet in behaviour. Be sweet in manners. Be sweet in singing Kirtan. Be sweet in lecturing. Be sweet in looks. Be sweet in serving others. Be soft, gentle, courteous and polite too. This increases your sweetness.

Develop this sweetness through service, self-restraint, Mouna, prayer, Pranayama, meditation, introspection, self-analysis, control of anger.

Sweetness is Radha Tattva. Sweetness is the stuff out of which the heart of Radha is fashioned. Truthfulness, Prem, sincerity, cosmic love, Ahimsa are all modifications of sweetness. Sweetness is rare, divine

blend of all these Sattvic attributes. It is millennium potency.

An argumentative, intolerant, impatient, proud, irritable, faultfinding man cannot cultivate sweetness.

May you all be endowed with this noble quality of sweetness which will enable you to root yourself in Brahman, the embodiment of Rasa, divine bliss of Sweetness of sweetesses. Glory to Brahman, the Sweetness of sweetesses!

9. Sweet Speech

The one quality which will bring for one respect, fame and the confidence of worthy men is the sweetness of speech. This is the one thing by practising which a person is esteemed by all and becomes famous. This is the one thing which yields happiness to all. One may always secure love of all creatures by practising sweetness of speech.

He who does not utter a word and whose face is always marked with frowns is hated by all. Lack of sweet speech makes him so. He who on seeing others speaks to him first with smile succeeds in winning over everyone. He gains the love of the world.

The quality of speaking first (Purvabhashitva) without craving for the prestige of being spoken to first by the other man is indeed a great quality. Lord Rama always spoke first. He was a Purvabhashi!

A gift unaccompanied by sweet speech does not please men. It is like food without condiments. It is like rice without curry.

A king who is desirous of even inflicting punishment should use sweet words. Sweetness of speech secures one's object, while at the same time it never pains any heart. Sweet speech pleases more than does the gift of an object.

A man of good actions and good, pleasant and sweet speeches has no equal.

10. Honesty and Faith

Honesty and faith are the subtle bonds that serve to hold individuals together in corporate life. They go together. If honesty did not exist one man will not believe another. Faith or trust between man and man will die out. Suspicion and doubt will fill all minds and life in society would soon become impossible. Fear and deep distrust will reign supreme. Each will regard all others as his enemies.

An honest man is readily trusted by all. All feel a sense of security in dealing with him. They know that they can rely upon him. They come to repose faith in him. This helps smooth dealing and harmonious relationship. The honest man also finds it easy to do his work too. Man fully realised the importance of this virtue and thus you have the adage, "Honesty is the best policy." But it is much more than a mere policy. Honesty is also the best principle to adopt in life. It must become a principle both subjectively and objectively, 'self-regardingly' as well as 'others-regardingly.' You must be honest with yourself, i.e., true to your inner self. You must be conscientious. Then you must also be honest in your dealing with others. Both are indispensable. If you regard honesty merely as an expedient and temporary policy then it becomes hypocrisy.

Honesty is not a virtue meant only for any particular section of mankind, as loyalty is to the subordinate, chastity is to the married women and filial piety and obedience is to children and students. Honesty is a universal virtue that must be cultivated by every human being. Masters, servants, parents, children, doctors, lawyers, merchants, businessmen, judges and administrators, all without exception should be scrupulously honest. It is a sacred duty and moral obligation in the interest of social solidarity.

An honest man is dear to the Lord. He showers His Grace and blessings upon such a one. Honesty never goes unrewarded in the long run. The honest man comes to be honoured by all.

The simple people of the countryside have retained this quality of guilelessness and honesty. The people of modern towns and cities are fast losing it. Duping, deception and downright swindling prevail in cities. This is a sad anomaly. Cities are supposed to be centres of advancement, of more enlightenment, greater refinement and culture. They ought to exhibit these virtues to a greater extent than country-simpletons who lack high education and learning. But the facts are quite the contrary. All life is founded upon faith and mutual trust. To keep intact this faith, honesty in dealings is quite indispensable.

11. Moderation

Moderation is an important virtue which is to be cultivated by a student of ethics or an aspirant. Moderation is freedom from excess in anything. Moderation is calmness of mind. Moderation is equanimity. Moderation is skill in Yoga. Without moderation no success is possible in Yoga, and in material pursuits also. All the luminaries of the world of the past observed moderation.

You should be moderate in eating, drinking, sleeping, reading, laughing, copulation, talking, exercise, etc. Lord Krishna says, "Verily Yoga is not for him who eats too much, nor who abstains to excess, nor who is too much addicted to sleep, nor even to wakefulness. Yoga kills all pains in him who is regulated in eating and amusement, regulated in performing actions, regulated in sleeping and waking" Chap. VI-16, 17. If you eat too much you will get too much sleep. Various diseases of stomach, intestines and liver will develop. All the internal organs will be overtaxed. Too much sleep will make you dull and Tamasic. Too much

copulation will drain your energy and cause weakness, low vitality and various diseases. Too much talking will disturb the peace of mind.

Lord Buddha plunged into extreme austerity in the beginning of his spiritual practices. He gave up food entirely. He did too rigorous Tapas. He suffered very much. His body became emaciated. He did not make much spiritual progress. Then he adhered to the golden medium. He began to take food in moderation. He regulated his spiritual practices. Only then he attained illumination. He always taught his disciples to stick to the middle path only. He learnt lessons from experience.

It becomes difficult for some to control the tongue. If the dishes are palatable they go beyond the limits of moderation. They overload the stomach. College students who have plenty of money with them go to the sweetmeat shops and eat sweetmeats for Rs. 5/- at a time. They cannot get up till the stomach is completely filled up. Complete filling of stomach is unhygienic and unscientific. Half the stomach only should be filled with food, a quarter with water. One quarter of the stomach must be free for expansion of gas. This is Mitahara or moderation in diet. You can check overloading of stomach through complete fasting on Ekadasi days, milk and fruit diet occasionally.

Always get up when there is still inclination to eat. Giving up salt for two or three days in a week will help you to reduce the quantity of your food. Reduction of food will not kill you. It will keep you quite healthy. It will help you to attain longevity.

Some students begin to study hard, forcing away sleep with strong tea, burning midnight oil just before appearing for the final examination. They lead a happy-go-lucky life for ten months. This is very bad. That is the reason why they fall sick on account of undue strain during the period of examination. Study must be

well regulated. You must prepare your lessons thoroughly every day.

Some aspirants give up their food and try to live on neem leaves for 40 days. This is foolish Tapas. They fall sick, become weak, and are not able to do any Sadhana. Lord Krishna condemns this, "The men who perform severe austerities unenjoined by the scriptures, wedded to vanity and egoism, impelled by the force of their desires and passions, unintelligent, tormenting the aggregate elements forming the body and Me who is seated in the inner body, know these to be demoniacal in their resolves." Do not spoil your health in the name of Tapascharya. Do not go to extremes in anything.

Sadhana also must be well-regulated. The period of meditation must be gradually increased. The period of Sirshasana must be gradually increased. The reduction of sleep must be gradual. When Sadhana is done by fits and starts there will be no spiritual progress.

Some people make friendship quickly with others, love them intensely for some time and break it quickly on account of some trivial causes. They are extreme in their manifestation of emotions. They love either intensely or hate intensely. The emotions also must be well-controlled. Do not move too much with anybody. Be moderate in this direction also. You can keep lasting friendship with everybody.

Be moderate in your expenditure. Regulate your expenses. Some are imprudent. They thoughtlessly spend in one month too much and borrow in the next month.

Be moderate in thinking. Kill all irrelevant, non-sensical, loose thoughts. Do not think too much. Entertain sublime, divine thoughts.

Be moderate in work. Do not overwork. Overwork is the cause for many diseases. If you overwork you cannot meditate.

He who is moderate in everything is a perfect Yogi. He enjoys happiness here and in the next world also. He moves about happily and is always cheerful. He keeps up perfect health and a higher standard of vigour, vim and vitality. He attains longevity and fame. He attains spiritual and material success.

Therefore stick to the golden or happy medium. Follow always the middle path. Give up extremes in everything and be happy for ever.

May moderation be your motto and ideal!

12. Tolerance

Tolerance is enduring of offensive persons or opinions. It is a virtue born of Sattva. Tolerance is a virtue and its opposite, intolerance, is a vice. A patient man only can practise tolerance.

Tolerance is needed in all spheres of life—social, economic, political and religious. Fights, quarrels, ruptures, frictions in society and domestic circles and war are all due to lack of tolerance. All social, religious and political institutions are held together by the cohesive force of tolerance. Tolerance is a marvellous lubricating oil which helps the smooth revolutions of the wheels of life.

A self-controlled man only can be endowed with tolerance. Intolerance denotes lack of refinement and culture. It shows the inability to appreciate different aspects in a thing. It is a sign of narrowness of heart and mind. He who has a large heart, who is free from prejudice, meanness, crookedness, intense hatred, pride, malevolence, who has his emotions under control, who is noble and magnanimous, can become a man of tolerance.

The vast majority of persons force their opinions on others. They think that their opinion only is correct. They cannot tolerate or brook contradictions, oppositions and criticisms. The least criticism or contradiction or

opposition makes them intolerant. Fights and quarrels ensue.

Great tolerance in matters of religion is necessary. Intolerance in religious views is the cause for religious persecutions, bloodshed and religious quarrels. The essentials of all religions are the same. All religions are one. They lead to the same goal. The different streams having their sources in different places, all mingle their waters in the ocean. Even so, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, all lead to the same goal or destination, viz., God-realisation or attainment of perfection or absolute freedom. If every man understands this, there will not be any religious intolerance or religious quarrel. One man hurts another man simply because the other man does not believe in the religion which he is following. This sort of intolerance must be ruthlessly annihilated if one wants to enjoy the peace of the Eternal.

The economical, social structures of the modern world can be held together only by the cement of tolerance and understanding. Understanding goes hand in hand with tolerance. Husbands and wives, masters and servants, parents and sons, the capitalists and the labour parties, the Government and the employees of Government have no tolerance and understanding and so splits and ruptures always result.

The cause for the last two great wars was due to lack of tolerance and understanding. Intolerance generates a hard crust in the brain and this prevents a man from comprehending the views of other people. The hard crust acts as a barrier and prevents the entry of the opinions of the others, however reasonable, into his brain. If a man can realise that there are always as many opinions and views as there are aspects to a subject and the temperaments that perceive it, that others' views and opinions are correct from their own viewpoint that others also have as much a right as himself to hold a particular opinion, much of the splits, discussions, debates and

quarrels we find in the society will come to an end. There will be more peace in the world.

A man of intolerance is a factor of discord wherever he goes. He is a constant problem in every assembly and gives a serious headache to all circles wherever he moves. He holds only one attitude, that of opposition. He opens his mouth only to oppose, contradict and condemn. But ultimately the intolerant man is himself a great loser. He fails to benefit by the valuable opinions of intelligent minds. He cannot profit by the experience of others. Thus he discards opportunities to improve himself and progress in knowledge. Like the frog in the well he lives within the narrow circle of his own pet opinions and misses the precious lesson of life.

Therefore develop tolerance and an understanding heart. Expand. Evolve. Grow. Do not oppose vehemently other people's views. Think well. Cogitate. Reflect. Give room in your heart for the views and opinions of all. Develop a very large heart. Mix freely with all religionists. Hear their views patiently, and behold the truth in them also. The teachings of all prophets and saints are the same.

May you all develop tolerance and understanding and thus lead a life of peace and perfection!

13. Fortitude

Fortitude is Dhriti. Fortitude is mental power of endurance. It is firmness in meeting danger. It is strength, power of resistance or passive, negative aspect of attack.

The birth of a man is due to his mixed Karmas, mixture of good and evil. Every man will have to meet dangers, calamities, adversities, catastrophes, want, pain, injury at some period of his life. He who is endowed with fortitude will bear them calmly with great presence of mind and tide over them with smiling face.

Fortitude is a sweet mysterious spiritual mixture of courage, calmness, patience, presence of mind and endurance. It is a virtue born of Sattva. It gives great strength of mind to Sadhakas, who tread the path of Truth and even to those who live in the world and tread the path of Pravritti.

That Sadhaka who is not endowed with fortitude leaves his Sadhana during times of peril, privation and sickness. He faints, croaks and loses heart. But the fortitude of a man sustains him through all perils, calamities, privations and sickness. It was fortitude that sustained Lord Rama and Sita, Nala and Damayanti, Yudhishtira and his brothers during their life in the forest when they were in great distress. Sri Harischandra, Jesus Christ, Rana Pratap, Abdul Ba'ab are examples of persons who possessed immense fortitude.

Fortitude is a friend in need. It is a nursing mother. It is a mental tonic and panacea. It is a shield and an armour to protect one from hunger, thirst, heat, cold. It is an unfailing injection to instil inner strength during times of threatening collapse and heart-failure. It is a potent weapon to combat against trying conditions of life and unfavourable circumstances.

The man of fortitude stands firm like the Himalayas during adversities. He keeps the balance of mind under all conditions of life. He is not shaken by heavy sorrows. Just as a rock on the seashore stands firm and is not affected by the dashing of waves, so also he stands firm even amidst storms and vicissitudes of this dire Samsara.

Just as the man in the battlefield protects his nose, eyes and other parts through special contrivance from the disastrous effects of explosive bombs, so also the Sadhaka and the wise man protects himself from the explosive gases of worldly adversities through fortitude and comes out victorious.

But the timid, weak man with the dastardly spirit who lacks in fortitude, trembles in the hour of danger, shrinks, faints and falls down in utter shame. He sinks in despair. He is bewildered and confused. He does not know what to do. He is like the reed that is shaken even by the least puff of breeze. He loses presence of mind. Fear, faint-heartedness, impotency overpower him. He hopelessly meets with failure and sorrow. He succumbs and yields during times of adversity and misfortunes.

Develop fortitude gradually and stand firm like that yonder Meru or Himavan. Cultivate this virtue again and again patiently.

Fortitude shows power of character. Just as to a man of high office his authority is his strength, to a nobleman his pedigree is his strength, to a great leader his status is strength and to a wealthy man his money is his strength, even so to a man of character, fortitude is his strength. It is what sustains him. It denotes self-confidence and self-reliance. Where there is fortitude there discouragement and pessimism dare not approach.

Fortitude is therefore the only real lasting strength; for high office, birth, leadership, money, all pass away. Character is lasting wealth; fortitude is a lasting power.

May you all attain success in worldly life and God-realisation through fortitude!

14. Self-Control

Self-control is an indispensable requisite for the living of a truly ethical life. Without self-restraint the practice of ethics is quite impossible. You may possess sublime sentiments and noble intentions. But when you have no self-control you will be a slave to baser passion. You will succumb to every temptation and commit endless wrong actions. You want to lead an ethical life but due to weak will and lack of self-control you fail. It is self-control which enables you to stick to the laws of ethics.

Self-control leads to the highest merit. Self-control is the eternal duty of man. Self-control surpasses in merit, charity, sacrifice and study of the Vedas.

Self-control increases your energy. Self-control is highly sacred. Through self-control you will be purified of all your sins, and gifted with energy and thereafter you will acquire the highest blessedness.

There is no other duty equal to self-control. Self-control is the highest virtue in this world. Through self-control you can enjoy the highest happiness both in this world and in the next. Gifted with self-control you will win great virtue.

The self-controlled man sleeps happily and awakes happily and moves through the world happily. He is always cheerful.

Self-control is the best of vows.

The man who is without self-control always suffers misery. He brings upon himself many calamities, all begotten by his own faults.

Forgiveness, patience, abstention from injury, impartiality, truth, sincerity, control of the senses, cleverness, mildness, modesty, firmness, liberality, freedom from anger, contentment, sweetness of words, benevolence, freedom from malice—all these combined make up self-control.

It also consists of respect for the preceptor and mercy for all. The man of self-control avoids both adulation and slander. Depravity, infamy, falsehood, lust, covetousness, pride, arrogance, self-edification, fear, envy and disrespect are all shunned by the man of self-control.

He never incurs obloquy. He is free from envy.

That eternal region of Brahman which originates from Vedic penance and which is concealed in a cave can only be acquired by self-control.

The self-controlled man is never fettered by the attachments originating from earthly connections and sentiments.

There is only one fault in self-control. No second fault is seen in it. A man who has self-control is considered by men as weak. By forgiveness the man of self-control may easily acquire happy worlds.

That is a forest where the man of self-control lives. That is ever a very sacred place. Of what use is a forest to a man of self-control? Of what use is the forest to him who has no self-control?

The man of self-control acquires great reward in the next world. He acquires esteem in this world and attains to a high end hereafter. He acquires the state of Brahma. He attains liberation.

15. Practice of Self-control

The ancients who had their minds directed upon the Srutis spoke highly of the duty of self-control for all the castes in general, but for Brahmanas in particular. One who is not self-controlled never enjoys success in religious rites. Religious rites, penances, truth—all depend upon self-control. The men of self-control become sinless and fearless and acquire great results.

Every sort of excitement is quietly controlled by self-control. One who is not self-controlled fails in his endeavours. The self-controlled man sees his numberless enemies such as lust, desire, anger, etc., as if these dwell in a separate body. Those who have no self-control strike all creatures with fear.

In all the modes of life the practice of self-control is distinguished above all virtues. The fruits of self-control are much greater than those obtainable in all the modes of life.

A self-controlled man should equip himself with nobility, calmness of nature, contentment, faith, forgiveness, simplicity, absence of talkativeness,

humility, reverence for elders, benevolence, mercy for all creatures, frankness, abstention from talk upon kings and men in authority, from all false useless topics and applause and censure of others.

The self-controlled man becomes desirous of liberation. He quietly bears present joys and griefs and he is never overjoyed or depressed by prospective ones.

He is shorn of vindictiveness and all sorts of guile. He is unaffected by praise and censure. He is well balanced. He has good manners. He has purity, fortitude. He is a perfect master of his passions.

He gains honours in the world. He goes to heaven after he departs from this world. He makes all creatures gain what they cannot acquire without his help, rejoices and becomes happy.

He is devoted to universal benevolence. He never feels animosity for anyone. He is tranquil like a calm ocean. He is wise and ever cheerful. He is endowed with intelligence. He obtains universal reverence. He never fears any creature and is feared by no creature in return.

That man who never rejoices even at large accessions and never feels sorrow when overtaken by misfortune is said to be endowed with wisdom and contentment. Such a man is said to be self-controlled. Indeed such a man is a real twice-born man.

A self-controlled man is well-read in the scriptures. He is gifted with purity of soul. He performs all those acts that are done by the good and enjoys their high fruits.

The wicked men never follow the path of benevolence, forgiveness, tranquillity, contentment, sweetness of speech, truth and liberty. They follow the path of lust, anger, cupidity, envy of others and boastfulness.

Overcoming lust and anger, practising the vow of Brahmacharya and becoming a complete master of his senses, the Brahmana practising patiently the austerest penances and observing the most rigid restraint, should

live in this world calmly waiting for his time like one seeming to have a body though fully knowing that he is not subject to destruction.

CHAPTER V

ENEMIES OF ETHICS

1. Nature of a Vicious Man

A vicious man is miserable both in this world and in the next. He commits sinful acts and feels an irresistible inclination for doing them. He speaks ill of others and is himself censured.

He always speaks of his own charitable acts. He beholds others with malicious eyes. He is very mean, deceitful and wily. He never pays others their dues. He is haughty. He lives in evil company. He always boasts of himself.

He fears and suspects all with whom he mixes. He is foolish in understanding. He is miserly. He praises his companions. He feels excessive aversion and hatred for hermits, Sadhus and Sannyasins.

He takes delight in injuring others. He is perfectly careless in marking the merits and faults of others. He is a terrible liar. He is discontented. He is highly covetous and always acts cruelly.

He considers a virtuous and qualified person as a pest and thinks every one else to be like himself. He never trusts anyone.

Such a person trumpets the faults of other people, however insignificant those faults may be. But about similar faults in his own self he does not refer to them even slightly or remotely for the sake of advantage, he reaps from them.

He regards the person who does him good as a simpleton whom he has imposed upon. He repents for having at any time made any gift of wealth even to the benefactor.

Know him for a wicked or malevolent person who quietly takes choice foods and drinks when persons stand by with eager eyes.

He who dedicates the first portion to Brahmanas and takes the rest, dividing it with friends and relatives acquires infinite bliss in the next world and great happiness here.

A vicious or malevolent person should be shunned by aspirants and wise men.

2. Anger

Control of anger is indispensable in the practice of ethics. Anger is your dire enemy. It is the enemy of peace, wisdom and devotion. It is born of Rajoguna. All evil actions proceed from anger. It is one of the three gates to hell. It is the slayer of all Tapas. Therefore, control anger through patience and forgiveness. Indulge not thyself in the passion of anger.

Bear slight provocations with patience. Forgive the faults of others. Forget not your own defects and weaknesses. Forget the wrong done to you by others. This is the way to control anger.

An angry man loses his understanding. Control anger before it bursts into a big wave, when it is in the form of a little irritability, in the form of a tiny ripple on the surface of the subconscious mind. If it is difficult for you to control it, try to prevent it. Be vigilant. Watch the Vrittis. Avoid all occasions of falling into resentment or indignation. Guard yourself against them whenever they occur. Be on the alert.

Do not argue. Do not enter into heated debates and discussions. Speak sweetly. Speak little. Be gentle. Be soft. Cultivate mildness, gentleness, softness again and again.

You may fail a thousand and one times in controlling your anger. Never despair. March forward. If you fall down, stand up and again tread on boldly. Do not give

vent to anger. Let it burn mildly within. Cool it with the nectar of Japa of Lord's names.

Bear insult, injury. Harbour not revenge in thy heart. Forget. Forgive. Be kind. Enquire. Reflect. Learn to become wise.

Talk sweetly and mildly to an angry man. Do not retort. You do not gain anything by becoming angry. On the contrary, there is a terrible wastage of energy and loss of health in becoming angry.

Anger is a sign of mental weakness. It always begins in folly or weakness and ends in repentance or remorse. If you control anger, you will have limitless energy in your reserve. Anger, when controlled, will be transmuted into a spiritual power which can move the whole world.

Good and bad are both in man. Human being is a mixture of both. All creatures contain forces of virtue and evil. It is the restraint of the evil and the active exercise of the good that raises man above other creatures. Anger makes the evil break out into harmful action. Self-restraint keeps the evil in check and affords scope for the exercise of virtues. Thus when anger is controlled, evil is controlled. Good prevails. Anger is the outlet or channel through which emerge harshness, cruelty, pain and harm, vengeance, violence, war and destruction. When anger is overcome your understanding becomes clear and discrimination is active. You are enabled to choose between right and wrong. You proceed without confusion upon the straight, narrow path of moral rectitude.

3. Covetousness

I

Covetousness too is a great destroyer. Sin originates from covetousness. Sin, impiety and great misery proceed from covetousness. This covetousness is also the root of all the cunningness and hypocrisy in the world. It is covetousness that makes men perpetrate sin.

From covetousness originates anger. From covetousness grows lust. It is covetousness which begets loss of judgment, deception, pride, haughtiness, malice, vindictiveness, shamelessness, loss of prosperity, loss of virtue, anxiety and infamy.

Covetousness also begets miserliness, cupidity, inclination for every sort of improper action, pride of birth, pride of learning, pride of beauty, pride of wealth, mercilessness for all creatures, malevolence towards all, trustlessness in respect of all, insincerity towards all, appropriation of other people's property, ravishment of other people's wives and harshness of speech.

Covetousness also causes anxiety, desire to speak ill of others, strong lustful desire, gluttony, liability to premature death, strong inclination to malice, strong desire for falsehood, irrepressible desire for indulging the passions, insatiable desire for indulging the ear, evil-speaking, boastfulness, arrogance, neglect of duties, rashness and perpetration of every kind of evil action.

Men are unable to abandon covetousness in life. It never vanishes even with the loss of life. Like the ocean that can never be filled by the continued flow of even countless rivers of immeasurable depths, covetousness is incapable of being conquered by any number of acquisitions. It is never satisfied by the fulfilment of desires. The real nature of covetousness is not known to the gods, and all beings.

Pride, malice, slander, wiliness and incapacity to hear other people's good, are vices that are to be seen in persons of impure soul under the influence of covetousness.

Even highly learned men who recollect all the scriptures and who are capable of removing the doubts of others appear very weak in this matter and are very miserable on account of this passion.

Covetous men are overwhelmed by malice and spite. They are beyond the range of good conduct. They are wily

in their hearts but their speeches are sweet. They are like dark pits, whose mouths are covered with grass.

They dress themselves in the hypocritical garb of religion. They are low-minded. They rob the world by posing as great religious preachers. They create various divisions in religion. They destroy the ways of righteousness, as they are anxious to serve cupidity.

Pride, anger, arrogance, insensibility, fits of joy and sorrow and self-conceit are seen in persons, who are prey to covetousness. They, who are always under the influence of covetousness are very wicked.

Covetousness, which is an irresistible passion which draws the heart to the unrealities of the world should always be conquered by a person of purified soul.

Satsanga, discrimination, dispassion, the practice of the opposite virtues such as nobility, generosity, charity, integrity, honesty, disinterestedness, Japa, Kirtan, meditation, enquiry, will eradicate covetousness, the dire enemy of wisdom, devotion and peace.

II

Attachment, hate, loss of judgment, joy, sorrow, vanity, lust, anger, pride, procrastination, idleness, desire, aversion, jealousy, envy and all other sinful habits pass by the common name of ignorance.

Ignorance and covetousness are the same. Both produce the same results or fruits and same faults. Ignorance originates from covetousness. Ignorance grows along with covetousness. Ignorance exists simultaneously with covetousness. It rises with the rise of covetousness. Manifold again is its course.

The root of covetousness is loss of judgment. Loss of judgment again, is its inseparable quality. Eternity is ignorance's course. The time when ignorance occurs is when the objects of covetousness are not attained.

From ignorance proceeds covetousness. Covetousness produces all faults. Hence abandon

ruthlessly covetousness by a strong determination. You will acquire happiness both here and in the next world by eradicating covetousness.

4. Drinking and Drugs

The sense of right and wrong, the faculty of discrimination and the will-power to make a deliberate choice of the good instead of the bad—these are the components of practical ethical life. To keep these faculties alert and unimpaired is a moral duty of every individual. Habits that blunt, weaken or destroy these faculties are a menace to ethical culture. However trivial these habits may appear outwardly, in the long run they tend to do incalculable harm to man. He who indulges in such habits perpetrates a serious transgression of ethical law.

Drinking ranks as the first of such soul-killing habits. It completely destroys the moral faculties of man, kills all lofty ambitions and aspirations and the higher nobler instincts in man. Man's nature becomes coarse and he sinks to a low level of extreme degradation. So widespread has this practice become that it is regarded as a social accomplishment and a fashionable desideratum. Whisky, champagne, brandy, gin and wines of various sorts have become like ordinary drink, like water and milk. In every social gathering such drinking has come to be accepted as a routine matter. Ladies too have acquired this baneful habit. In some modern families father and son, mother and daughter, all sit and drink at the same table. Slowly the habit grows and makes them inveterate drunkards. Thousands of crimes and murders are committed under the influence of drink. Where drinking is present there vices are rampant. It is a dangerous enemy of the ethical life of mankind. It is an onerous responsibility and a duty of the individual, the leaders of community, religious heads, and the government to strive vigorously and banish this evil from the face of the land.

An equally widespread evil, a counterpart to drink, is the vicious habit of taking drugs like opium, Bhang, Charas, hemp, Ganja. Like toddy shops, these too are sold at licensed shops to drug addicts. This evil is widespread in Northern India. It kills all initiative. The finer emotions and sentiments in man perish through the slow poisoning by these drugs. It fuddles the brain, destroys clarity of thought and judgment and makes man a prey to vague fancies and hallucinations. The addict becomes subject to neurosis and lapses into a world of phantasy, incapable of facing the realities of life. These intoxicants produce abnormal excitation, perversion and moral corruption. Even persons of good family, culture and refinement, with great talent and abilities become maniacs and total wrecks when caught by drug addiction. To some extent, habitual smoking also deadens one's moral faculties. But their harm is not fully realised because their working is slow, cumulative and insidious. So entirely devoid of shame the drug-addict becomes that when the craving overwhelms him he even falls at the feet of the supplier and cringes. He even sells the ornaments from his wife's person to procure the drug. He loses all sense of honour.

When the spectre of such vices stalk the fair land of Bharatavarsha, how can there be ethical advancement? How can ethical life and culture prosper at all? A moral army to combat these enemies is the only hope of overcoming these deep-rooted vices. May all people, young and old, be inspired to form a band to fight these evils which are destroyers of ethical life!

5. Gambling

Gambling is a great curse in modern society. No one gains anything and yet people gamble. Gambling is more intoxicating than wine and women. Gambling is Maya's greatest tempting bait to entrap the poor, deluded, ignorant, passionate souls.

Pushkara challenged King Nala for dice game and Nala agreed. Nala lost everything. The more he lost, the more infatuated did he become. With nothing more than the cloth he wore, he left his house in a destitute condition. Damayanti, attired in a single piece of cloth followed the departing king behind. What a sad state! It was all the result of gambling.

Yudhishtira also gambled with Duryodhana and lost his kingdom. He had to enter the forest with Draupadi.

Gambling gives false hopes always. It tempts the player. Gambling is a weapon of Maya. The gambler thinks always that he will win in the next play. But he goes on losing only.

Gambling spoils entirely the character of a man. It makes him irreligious and unrighteous. It makes him excited and to lose sound judgment and sense of decorum. It makes him an atheist. It brings him in the company of evil-minded persons and dregs of the society. Drinking, adultery, meat-eating are the constant companions of gambling. The chief abode of Kali Purusha is the gambling place.

All gamblers are totally ruined. They have become street beggars. Gamblers lose their understanding. Gambling turns men into cheats. Gamblers become dishonest, crooked, full of deception and falsehood. They contract debts which they know they cannot pay. 'Beg, borrow or steal' becomes their principle and motto. They are treated with contempt. They become victims to all sorts of vices. Their lot is miserable and lamentable!

Do not go near the place of gambling. Do not associate even for a second with a gambler. Do not look at him. Do not talk to him.

During Deepavali, people gamble in Northern India for several days and nights. Even a poor man saves two hundred rupees for gambling during Deepavali. People are allowed to gamble freely during these days. The

Government licenses such vice. Contractors make much money. Proprietors get their due share. So widespread is the betting habit that even little schoolboys and ladies too are inveterate gamblers. In every field of life betting is present. Even business people bet.

This should be entirely stopped. Gamblers should be prosecuted and put in jail. Contractors and proprietors should be punished severely. Even if they escape here, the All-knowing Lord will punish them. As they encourage this vice they are sent to regions of darkness. They also suffer from chronic incurable diseases in the next birth. They are born as beggars.

Horse-racing, playing cards, other forms of betting and games of chance during carnival show are all forms of gambling. All return from the race-course weeping with a broken heart after losing much money and yet they cannot leave their betting. Mysterious is this temptation of gambling. Poor victims die with an afflicted heart after losing everything.

Abandon the gambling habit at once. Live in the company of the wise and lead the divine life. Satsanga is an impregnable fortress where there is no scope for the entry of Maya and her companions.

Do not waste your precious time in playing cards, in writing solutions for crossword puzzles, gambling and race-courses. Money earned through crossword puzzles will not stick to you even for a day. Life is meant for higher, spiritual purpose. Wake up. O ignorant man! Struggle hard and obtain the Supreme, inexhaustible spiritual wealth and be happy for ever.

6. Prostitution

Man, who is essentially divine, forgot all about his divine nature on account of ignorance and is whirling in the whirlpool of little, vulgar pleasure. Mysterious is Avidya or ignorance. Mysterious is Moha or infatuation.

Prostitution is a great social evil. It must be entirely stopped through proper understanding and education. It spoils the whole fabric of the society and undermines the integrity of the nation at large. It is the cause for the widespread havoc of the two important venereal diseases, viz., gonorrhoea and syphilis, which destroy the health of men and women and make them wrecks with dilapidated frame, and ill-health throughout their lives.

Gonorrhoea and syphilis are God-sent curses on men who violate the laws of health and lead a despicable life of loose morals.

Even men who have got their wives lead a life of dissipation. What a great shame! They have taken a pledge before the sacred fire (God Agni) that they would be true to their wives and yet they lead a life of immorality. These deluded souls of little understanding deserve capital punishment. The Divine Law of cause and effect is inexorable and unrelenting. It will not spare them at all.

People who contract venereal diseases suffer in silence. They feel ashamed to consult the doctor in time and they allow the disease to strike deep root in their system. Various complications arise and the blood is surcharged with the venereal poison or germs, gonococci and spirochaetae pallida. Bones and internal organs are affected.

Then they take recourse to a course of injection "606" and "914" Salvarsen and neo-Salvarsen. They spend lots of money testing their blood. All injections prove futile.

As they have no self-restraint they become victims of passion and communicate the disease to their innocent wives. They also suffer in silence. They get abortions and still-births. Their children also get congenital syphilis.

O ignorant man! Have you realised now at least your folly? Will you promise me that you will lead a good

virtuous life from this moment at least? O young man! Have you understood now the disastrous effects of an immoral life? Will you take a vow now that you will lead a pure life and be true to your wife (Ekapatni Vrata)?

O college boys! Do not waste your father's money in towns, in restaurants, hotels and cinemas. Beware, do not become victims of gonorrhoea and syphilis. Your whole life will be spoiled. Learn the ways of self-control from Sadhus and Sannyasins. Be regular in Japa, Kirtan, meditation and study of holy scriptures. You are the future citizens of the world. You are the hope and glory of India. Be pure. Be chaste. Be virtuous. Be righteous. You will reach the peak of perfection and divine glory. Do not spoil this precious life in gratification of the flesh. Soar high in the realms of spirituality.

Learn to soothe the itching of nerves through sublime thinking and divine contemplation. Become a true superman. See Goddess Durga in all women. Change your angle of vision. Draw inspiration from Bhishma, Lakshmana, Hanuman, and do deeds that will make your lives glorious, sublime and remarkable. Earn undying reputation through virtue, Tapas and meditation.

Once a man gets caught in the grip of prostitution he becomes a beast. He is turned into an Asuric being. He completely loses his moral sense and becomes shameless. He stops at nothing. He takes to drinking, gambling, stealing, and even commits murder. He has no real honourable position in society. Therefore never approach within its baneful influence. Be always alert and save yourself from this terrible fire.

Prostitution is encouraged by making it a recognised, licensed profession. Instead of striving to eradicate the evil they have gone to accept it as something inevitable. Such is the moral bankruptcy of mankind. Adharma destroys the strength and heroism of

man. Dharma alone can give man the courage and the power to fight and triumph over such deep-rooted evils.

Clandestine prostitution is another evil. Some hotels and shops are really brothel houses. Secret prostitution is going on there. They are centres of great sin. Are there not other decent ways of earning your livelihood? Why do you adopt this base ignoble, condemnable way of living? Stop this at once. Become a true man. Do not become a slayer of soul. Give up this disgraceful way of living. You are not crawling now. You are a man. You are walking now.

O fallen sisters! Do not sell your body. Rise high. Walk in the footsteps of Sita, Damayanti, Anasuya, Mira. You are all daughters of Mother Durga. You are worshipful divine Mothers. Know your real essential nature and lead a virtuous life and become divine Mothers.

May this world be free from prostitution of any kind! May you all lead a life of purity and righteousness and thus attain freedom, perfection and sweet harmony.

7. Eradication of Vices

Vices are the destroyers of ethical life. They are the poisonous weeds that rapidly grow and choke up the fragrant flowers of virtue that blossom in the fair garden of ethical life. Unless vices are eradicated through resolute effort and self-purification your moral well-being is not safe. It is in constant danger.

Anger, lust, sorrow, loss of judgment, inclination to injure others, jealousy, malice, pride, envy, slander, incapacity to see the good of others, unkindness and fear are very powerful enemies of all creatures. These approach men and tempt them from all sides. They goad and afflict a careless or a foolish man. They attack him powerfully like a tiger jumping upon its prey. From these originate all sorts of grief and sin.

Anger takes its origin from covetousness. It is strengthened by the shortcomings of others. It lies dormant through forgiveness. It disappears through forgiveness.

Lust takes its origin from impure resolution. Indulgence strengthens it. When you resolutely turn away from it, it vanishes and dies.

Envy of others takes its origin from anger and covetousness. It disappears through mercy and knowledge of Self and disregard for all worldly objects. It also originates from seeing the weakness of other people. But in intelligent men it quickly vanishes through true knowledge.

Loss of judgment springs from ignorance and sinfulness of habit. When the victim whom this fault attacks begins to remain in the company of wise men, it immediately vanishes.

Men find divergent scriptures. Therefrom springs the desire for various kinds of action. When true knowledge has been acquired, that desire is satisfied.

The sorrow of man springs from separation from beloved persons. When one learns that the dead do not come back, it vanishes.

Incapacity to bear other peoples' prosperity or good, originates from anger and covetousness. It dies through mercy for every creature and indifference to all worldly objects.

Malice originates from the abandoning of truth and indulgence in wickedness. This vice vanishes when one serves the wise and good.

Pride takes its origin from birth, learning and prosperity. When these three are truly known, this vice at once vanishes.

Jealousy springs from lust and greed in low and mean people. It is destroyed by knowledge.

Slander takes its origin from errors of men's daily conduct and through disagreeable speeches expressing aversion. It disappears when the whole world is seen.

When the person who injures is powerful and the one injured is unable to avenge the injury, hate manifests. It vanishes through kindness.

Covetousness takes its origin from ignorance. It vanishes when you see the instability of all objects of enjoyment.

The tranquillity of the soul can alone conquer all the above faults.

CHAPTER VI

SPECIAL ETHICS

Besides psychological ethics and Varnashrama ethics there is professional ethics also.

1. Legal Ethics

There is observance of ethics for an advocate or Vakil, pleader or solicitor or barrister-at-law in the professional matters. He must not take up a doubtful case simply for the sake of fees, even when he feels sure that he cannot succeed.

He must not coach up false witnesses. Coaching up of false witnesses is itself a crime. It is a heinous sin. An advocate who coaches up false witness kills his conscience and soul also. In addition, he corrupts others also. He cannot have any progress in the spiritual path. He cannot argue forcibly, because falsehood has no strength. He cannot stand up with a majestic attitude as his moral backbone is fragile. He cannot be sure of success though he may twist and distort in diverse ways. Truth alone will triumph in the end.

When he takes up a case he must sincerely work for it even though there is some delay in getting his fees from his client.

He must take up the cases from poor people freely. He must work for the public good also without fees. This will be his Karma Yoga. This will purify his heart. Mark how sincerely and intensely Bhulabhai Desai worked for the cause of the public even during his last days. He has earned undying reputation through this noble work. Prakriti has given you legal knowledge and you should

utilise the knowledge in protecting her poor, helpless children.

Once Pundit Motilal Nehru wanted to take fees even from the Congress people. Jawaharlal Nehru said, "Venerable father! For whose sake are you accumulating money?" Motilal Ji said, "It is for you. You are my beloved son." Jawaharlal Nehru said, "Beloved father! I do not want even a single pie from your earnings, I will maintain myself independently. Kindly take up the case without fees. This is public Seva." This opened the eyes of Motilal Ji. He said, "Jawaharlal call those people. I sent them away with an unsympathetic heart. I will work in this case without fees." The words of Jawaharlal changed the life of his father. He abandoned his legal profession and became a sincere fiery Congress-worker.

Lawyers say, "We cannot pull on in this profession without telling direct lies or modified lies. We cannot get success without coaching up false witnesses." This is a mistake. Lawyers who deliberately falsify truth and twist falsehood to make it appear as fact are the minions of Kali-purusha himself. They have allied themselves to the undivine forces of darkness and become the tools of Satan. There are some conscientious Vakils who do not take up weak cases and who do not coach up false witnesses. They are lions in the bar. They have roaring practice. They are known everywhere as honest and sincere advocates. Clients flock to them in great numbers. Truthful persons only will shine and get success. Study the book "Experiments with Truth," by Mahatma Gandhi and you will know how truthful was Gandhiji in his profession.

By your clever advocacy you have sent many innocent persons to the jail and to the gallows. What a great crime! What a horrible unpardonable deed! You will reap the consequences of this sinful act. You will have no good merit in your store a good future birth. You will take inferior births. You will suffer from incurable diseases in the next birth.

Have you not heard of the great sensational Tirupathi case? Lord Venkatesa Himself came as a witness. The judge gave up his job and became an ascetic.

Money is not the goal. It cannot give you eternal happiness. Lead a virtuous life. Be honest and truthful. Do not coach up false witnesses. Plead for the poor freely. Do Japa, Kirtan and meditation. You too can attain the final emancipation or the abode of immortal bliss.

So established in untruth, deception and crookedness is man that he is not fully aware how great and grave an injury he is doing to society. The existence of law is to uphold truth and dispense justice. But immorality in the profession strikes at the root of justice and righteousness itself and where truth is to be established there falsehood is glorified.

2. Medical Ethics

A doctor should not divulge the secrets of his patients to others.

When he has taken up a case under his treatment he should not refuse to attend on the patient in his house, simply because he has not paid the visiting charges of the previous day. He is morally responsible to treat the patient till he is cured. The patient may pay his visiting fees after a couple of days.

Under the name of so-called professional etiquette a doctor should never refuse to see a patient who has sent urgent summons. You must not refuse to see a patient because he has consulted another doctor.

A surgeon receives Rs. 500/- for the operation of Hernia. The patient is on the table. His abdomen has been opened. The surgeon finds some other complication, not anticipated. He has to do some other operation. If he tells the father of the patient, "You will have to pay another five hundred rupees. This complication means a more difficult operation. It is extra

work. Otherwise I will not do this operation," he goes against the principles of medical ethics. To bargain when another's life is at stake is inhuman. He must do the operation successfully. Later on, he may request the client politely to pay some more money if he is in a position to pay the amount.

The primary duty of the doctor is the relief of suffering. He must treat and cure his patients in as short a time as possible. To keep postponing a complete cure in order to be receiving fees for some time longer is a heinous crime. Never prolong the disease of the patient. It is criminal to "maintain cases."

Do not experiment upon poor patients and destitute cases. Life is sacred. Consider how you will feel if some callous medical man tries experiments on you or your own dear relation when in a grave condition.

When there is an epidemic of any disease, he must try his level best to stop the epidemic. He must suggest various methods and easy measures to the people to check it.

He must disseminate the knowledge of hygiene and public health, child-welfare, ante-natal and post-natal care of mothers, through magic lantern demonstrations, public lectures and study-classes.

If a poor patient approaches him for treatment he must give him medicine free. He must evince great interest and joy in serving the poor.

He should not give an injection of mere water to the patient and get a large sum of money by telling him that it is the most costly medicine. This is high moral corruption.

He must charge moderate fees. His goal must not be to become a millionaire, but to become a kind and sympathetic doctor. Here is a great field for him to purify the heart quickly and to attain God-realisation through sincere service alone, with Atmic Bhava.

He should not give wrong suggestion to the patients and frighten them. "This is an incurable disease. This is an advanced case of T.B." He must know the power of suggestion. Wrong suggestions will kill the patient soon. He should always speak sweet, encouraging words to the patient, "Be not afraid, brother. I will cure it in a few days. You will be all right soon." Such a doctor alone can do real good to the suffering humanity.

A doctor's heart should melt at the suffering of the patients. He should move from door to door and treat the poor freely. He should spend one-tenth of his income in giving medicine to the poor.

The doctor should always bear in mind that the knowledge of healing he has acquired is not solely for mercenary gain but to enable him to play a worthy part in society. Therefore apart from his "practice" the doctor should ever watch and see where there is suffering and where his aid is needed. His duty does not merely consist in sitting at his table and waiting for the telephone bell to ring and call him to a case. This is a moral duty of doctors.

A great service that doctors can render to the nation is to make all the children "hygiene-conscious." The health of the nation is to be safeguarded and built up right from the start. Parents fail to instruct children in elementary matters of health and hygiene. The doctors should make it their duty to impart the rudiments of personal hygiene to every child.

The doctor who is intent only upon extracting money from his patients, who has become callous to the sufferings of others, who is unsympathetic and harsh to sufferers, who imposes upon the credulity and ignorance of the patients and exploits their helpless condition is no better than a beast in human form. Grave retribution will overtake such a transgressor. Severe punishment is in store for him. The pain and the suffering that he

heartlessly causes to the patients will react and descend upon him multiplied a hundredfold.

He should feel that all are manifestations of the Lord and that he is serving the Lord. Such a doctor is veritable God on this earth. Glory to this Doctor!

3. Business Ethics

There is business ethics also. A businessman also should practise ethics. Only then he will not be affected by sin. Only then he will prosper.

People say that one will have to tell lies in business if he wants to prosper. This is a serious mistake. Those who are strictly honest and truthful will flourish in business. People will go to them only as they are truthful in their dealings.

Falsehood first entered a cloth-merchant's shop. If you enter a cloth-merchant's shop, he says first, that one yard costs ₹8/-, then bargaining or haggling goes on for one or two hours. At last he comes to ₹1.50 per yard. This sort of business goes on in most of the business-houses. Cheating and falsehood are the basic traits of a businessman. His conscience has been blunted by covetousness and dishonesty. He is miserable in this world despite his wealth and possessions and, will be unhappy in the next world also, because he is not leading a moral life. He does not know what he is exactly doing as his understanding is clouded.

Immorality does not mean sexual depravity and illegal adultery only. He who tells lies and cheats others is also leading an immoral life. He is also an immoral man in the broad sense of the term.

A manufacturer puts a spurious preparation on the market. One man mixes sand in the wheat. One businessman adulterates ghee, flour and other foodstuffs. The carpenter uses inferior wood and charges as for the best wood. A contractor uses third-class bricks

and charges for first-class bricks etc. These are all instances of cheating.

What is this glittering prosperity in the business after all? To eat a little delicious food, to move in a car, to become a Municipal Councillor cannot give you everlasting happiness. This is not the goal of life. This is a foolish man's idea of happiness. Quite puerile indeed! These are all toys of ignorant children. Wise people will laugh at these things.

Earn your bread by honest means. Dishonesty and cheating will bring on you incurable diseases like cancer, tuberculosis, ulcer in the stomach, fistula, deafness, dumbness, blindness, burning in the heart and feet and deformity of limbs in your next birth. Action and reaction are equal and opposite. You will have to suffer in your next birth for every wrong deed you commit in this birth. Be careful in your thought, speech and action. Be good and do good. Understand the law of cause and effect.

Spend one-tenth of your income in charity. Charity covers multitude of sins. Do regular charity. Merely giving a few rupees in charity occasionally when you are in distress, is not praiseworthy.

Take a moderate and reasonable profit. Be truthful and honest in your dealings. Do not smother and kill your conscience. Keep your conscience ever clean and pure. Do abundant charity. You can prosper in your business. You will not be tainted and corrupted by business. Goddess Lakshmi will ever dwell with you.

Do Satyanarayana Katha every full-moon day. Help social and religious institutions. Open Sanskrit schools and Ayurvedic dispensaries, hospitals, girls' schools, free primary schools. Dig wells in the villages. Construct Sankirtan Bhavans. Let your profit be well utilised in charitable purposes. You will earn great merit. You will be happy here and in the next world.

If you are ever conscious that the Lord or the Indweller is witnessing your thoughts and actions, if you

really have understood the law of cause and effect, you will not dare to do any wrong deed, you will try to avoid evil action and gradually minimise your wrong deeds.

If you have really understood the Vedantic truth of oneness you will not try to deceive others. In deceiving others you deceive yourself. In helping others you help yourself. There is only one Self in all beings. That is the only Reality.

4. Industrial Ethics

Times have changed vastly. Society is not what it was hundreds of years before. Humanity has developed newer fields that were absent in the ancient social order. There is industrialisation of whole nations. Large-scale industries and factory systems are everywhere. These factors give rise therefore for ethical rules peculiarly suited to the conditions and situations prevailing under these special circumstances.

An industrialist becomes too machine-minded. He comes to regard the army of workers he employs to be so many automatons. He has no sympathy towards the labourers. This is wrong. It is his moral duty to look to their welfare inasmuch as their labours go to build up his prosperity.

Usually labour in vast large-scale industries is recruited from the domain of poverty. They are obliged to work for their very existence. The industrialist should not take advantage of this and extract sweated labour. He must pay fair and adequate wages, afford them facilities instead of driving them to undertake strikes, demonstrations, etc. Heartless exploitation of labour is a grave transgression of moral law.

Industrial relationship is based upon contract. However purely secular the sphere of industry is, yet a contract between man and man is always a sacred matter. This contract too should be viewed as such. Then alone Dharma will prevail. The worker is equally

responsible for respecting this mutual contract and should give his sincere best in the interest of his employer. This relationship is not merely centred upon giving and receiving money.

The existence of jealousy, malicious rivalry and cut-throat competition is the bane of modern industry. This is Asuric and unethical. Big industrialists combine not for cooperation but to crush and destroy smaller concerns. To corner the market by superior buying power and ruin small-scale industries is unethical. Creating artificial demand through wanton destruction of valuable raw materials when the latter is sorely needed by people, is deliberate flouting of ethical law. This is why grave retribution overtakes civilisation based upon such pillars of Adharma.

Greed and cupidity are the causes of industrial immorality. Insatiable craving for profit drives you to a total disregard of all Dharma. It makes you quite unscrupulous. Therefore give up greed. Lust not after wealth. Know that God has given you industrial acumen, genius for organisation and money-power to promote the welfare of the human community. You are custodians of special talent and wealth for utilising them for common weal first, and then increase your prosperity.

May the present-day industrialists realise their precarious drift towards Adharma and become helpers to the progress and welfare of the human race! May they stick to the laws of ethics and thus derive true happiness and peace in addition to the mere material profit!

5. International Ethics

Just as there is social ethics for the society, there is international ethics for the nations of the world for maintaining peace. Nations can prosper only if they stick to the principles of international morality. Had the nations adhered to the international moral principles there would not have been any war at all.

Lust for power, dominion and self-aggrandisement overpowers the nations and makes them lose the power of understanding and the faculty of morality. Hence they break the ethical principles.

The ethical laws which govern the relations of individuals to one another in society should also govern the relations of nations to one another. There is absolute necessity for the international morality. This dire need is keenly felt by the heads of nations after the Great War. A World-Federation should be established. Then alone the international morality can be put into practice. A well-organised World-Federation can prevent war among nations and ensure peace in the world.

But such an organisation will function successfully only when its members are noble men with pure and lofty ideals. They should be imbued with the spirit of tolerance, cooperation and brotherhood. They must set aside narrow racial spirit and have wide universal vision. If not the organisation will fail like the League of Nations after the Great War and the U.N.O. today.

The advance of science has removed time and space. Within a few hours you can reach London and New York. Now railways, ships, aeroplanes, radio, television have made the world one. The whole world is a closely knit unity now. The countries and nations are now interdependent. Economic prosperity or depression of one country reacts on all other countries. If one nation suffers it brings sufferings on the other nations also, just as a diseased rheumatic knee-joint reacts on the mind and the other parts of the body also. A country or a nation cannot rise much in culture and civilisation unless other countries or nations also are raised.

Though the whole world is brought into a sort of unity, yet there is no international ethical advancement. There is not much justice, love and fair treatment among the nations. The brotherhood of man is forgotten. The law of "survival of the fittest" which applies to the

animals in the forests rules the international relations. "Might is right." Those who possess more atomic bombs are the rulers of the world. They can get more privileges in trade or commerce. They can be in possession of vast dominions. They exploit the weak, hold them in subjection. This is the cause for war and moral degeneration.

Equal privileges should be given to all nations. Every nation should have equal rights. Nothing should be the monopoly of a particular nation. No nation should have absolute sway or supremacy in anything. Sea, land, and air also must be the common property of all nations, just as the sunlight, breeze and water are the common property of all. All are children of God. Hence all are brothers.

Misunderstood and mispractised nationalism, imperialism and militarism stand in the way of the growth of international morality. Imperialism and militarism should die. Humanism, humanitarianism and Vedantism should take their places. Then alone there will be perpetual peace in the world. The presidents and dictators should come to India, study Vedanta and live in the spirit of Vedanta.

Vedanta and Vedantic ethics should become compulsory for all students in all schools and colleges of the world. It must be properly understood and put into practice by all. This alone will contribute to peace, universal love, unity, proper understanding, world-harmony and brotherhood to mankind. This alone will put an end to the manufacture of atomic bombs and machine-guns.

6. Domestic Ethics

(1) *Yoga at Home*

Sometimes the house becomes a hell when there is no religious unity between husband and wife. If the husband is religious the irreligious wife does not allow

him to study religious books, to sit in meditation, to visit holy places of pilgrimage, to practise Brahmacharya and to have Satsanga with great souls. She is afraid that he will become a Sannyasi even though he gives a solemn pledge that he will not do so. There are always quarrels in the house between husband and wife. The husband has no peace of mind even though he earns a decent sum and has got all the earthly comforts. The wife threatens the husband, "I will burn all your religious books as study of these books only has produced a change in you and you are neglecting me and do not take any interest in household affairs. I will throw stones at the head of the man who has written these books and has inspired you to take recourse to Yogic practices. Fools only will practise Yoga." How can men live happily with such ignorant and irreligious women? It is better to dwell in the midst of Asuric women like Tataka in the forest than to remain in the company of such horrible women who disturb the peace of the house. If your wife stands in your way of doing spiritual practice mildly suggest to her that you will take to Sannyasa. Then she will come to her senses.

It is the duty of the husband to train his wife also in the religious line. She must do some Japa, and Kirtan. She must study religious books such as the Ramayana, the Bhagavata and the Mahabharata. She must take recourse to occasional fasting. He must take her to places of pilgrimage and attend discourses and Kathas conducted by Mahatmas. The wife must help the husband in his religious and Yogic practices. Then only the house will be a blessed place.

Some have taken Sannyasa on account of the bad behaviour of their wives and their hindrance to Yogic practices at home. If they had allowed their husbands to continue their practices and helped them, they would have remained in the Grihastha Ashram. It is the duty of intelligent girls to cooperate with their husbands in leading a religious life at home. Then only both can lead a

life of peace and happiness at home. The scriptures declare, "Without religion a house is a burial ground though it is a palace."

The husband also should not interfere with the religious practices of his wife. He should help her in all possible ways in her spiritual evolution and purity of life.

May there be temperamental, psychological and spiritual unity between the husband and wife! May the husband help the wife and vice versa in religious and Yogic practices! May God-realisation be your watch-word! May purity be your maxim! May Dharma be your guide!

(2) To Husbands and Wives

Quarrels arise daily in the house between the husband and the wife on account of misunderstanding and difference of opinion. The wife thinks that the husband should obey and please her in all respects. The husband thinks that the wife should obey and please him in all respects. Is this possible? No. And so they quarrel every hour. It may not come into regular fists and blows at all times, but they will not speak for some hours in the day. Sometimes there will be boxing and cane-beating also if the husband is short-tempered and lacks self-control. At other times the husband breaks the vessels when he loses his temper. If the wife is like Mrs. Socrates or Jijibai (Mrs. Tukaram), the table will be turned. There will be thunder and rain on the husband's head. Sometimes the wife, when she becomes angry, refuses to cook the food and lies down in the bed drawing a blanket over her body and head under the pretext of severe stomachache. The poor husband runs to the hotel to take his meals in order to catch the pilot train to go to his office. Sometimes the wife goes to her mother's house without informing the husband. The poor shameless weak-willed husband runs to his mother-in-law's house to bring her back with fresh glowing, golden promises and entreaties.

The wife must be ever ready to receive a volley of abuses when the dishes are not prepared to the fastidious taste of her husband. These are only minor, unimportant causes for daily quarrels. The major causes are too numerous to be mentioned here. You already know them in full and in details also.

But still, if you ask a householder, "Which is better, a householder's life or a life of a Brahmachari?" surely he will say "Householder's life is thousand times better than the life of a celibate." He will vehemently fight with all his clumsy arguments to support his view. Do you remember the story of the king who took birth of a pig and was rejoicing with his piglings. His case is similar to this king.

People have neither discrimination nor dispassion nor subtle sharp intellect. Hence they are not able to know things in their true light. Their intellects are clouded, perverted, turbid, intoxicated and veiled by passion, delusion, infatuation and ignorance. Hence they do not know what they are exactly doing.

When they are swayed with passion, husbands and wives forget all about their quarrels which occurred in the morning. They think that their life is a blessed one. They utter pleasantly some flowery speech for the time being, though there is no real union and love in the core of their heart.

Try to possess self-control. Rise above passions. Be pure. Develop good behaviour, good conduct. Control anger. Be regular in Japa, Kirtan, meditation and study of the Gita. Lead a life of an ideal householder. Go through my books "Advice to Householders" and "Sure Ways for Success in Life and God-realisation." Put the instructions in daily practice.

O Ram! Treat your wife like a Devi. She is the queen or Lakshmi of the house. Where woman is honoured, there are wealth, prosperity, success and peace. O Lila! Become a Pativrata. Do not quarrel with your husband. Become like Savitri, Anasuya or Sita.

May you all lead a life of Purity, with devotion and attain the supreme blessedness in this very life.

7. Spiritual Progress

The workings of Maya are so very extremely subtle, so very difficult to overcome, and human nature is fundamentally so Asuric and unregenerate that real spiritual development and progress in Sadhana are indeed very hard to obtain. To achieve success in any measure in the spiritual life is so difficult and uphill task that truly it is Divine Grace alone that can raise the aspirant from darkness to Light. So vehement, self-assertive and rebellious is the egoistic self of man that it refuses to be changed from its vicious state to a state of virtue, goodness and saintliness. It is a great blunder to think that the mere act of renunciation is sufficient achievement in spiritual life. If renunciation makes you feel that you have at once become quite superior to the rest of mankind and has bestowed on you the right to preach and to dictate to others, then the very purpose of renunciation gets blasted. You destroy the very foundation of spiritual life by this egoistic assumption. The eradication of egoism in all its numerous aggressive forms comprises the very core of spirituality and all spiritual Sadhana.

Right from the very beginning of your spiritual life, you must understand clearly that in true humility, sincere desire to root out gradually pride, egoism and jealousy earnest and unceasing introspection to find out one's own defects and improve oneself, lies your hope of progress. Without this basis, all sorts of Sadhana become a delusion and a waste. It makes the aspirant puffed up, more proud and egoistic. When this happens, all good advices and instructions fall flat upon him. Higher influences cease to have any effect as the aspirant becomes deliberately and obstinately non-receptive to them.

Eternal vigilance should be exercised by every aspirant if he is to avoid falling into this dangerous state. Spiritual life is not a light matter. To grow in Yoga is not an easy joke. Sadhakas must take the path sincerely. Always feel that you are just a beginner and strive diligently to acquire the primary virtues of kindness, charitableness, patience, forbearance with boldness, manliness and self-reliance combined with humility, softness of speech and behaviour, and self-denial. Be ready to serve others and put up with provocation and abuse without retaliation. Remove all harshness and rudeness from your nature. Courtesy and politeness must become part of your very nature. Then alone you can become pure. Then alone your nature becomes Sattvic. Then alone the hardened heart gets softened and good sentiments and spiritual emotions arise in it.

Concentration, meditation and Samadhi are still far far from him who has not purified himself and got rid of his evil traits. Sinning and evil have become so much a habit with man that he never feels that he is committing them even though day and night he is doing so constantly. And the greatest harm is done by the fact that even while in this unregenerate state, the aspirant becomes deluded by Maya into thinking that he has already progressed considerably in spirituality. He deceives himself with the thought that as far as he is concerned he is pretty advanced in Sadhana. He thinks he has acquired that Nirlipta (unattached) attitude where he can commit any sort of act and yet remain unaffected by it. This self-deception puts a bar to all progress. Under this grave delusion he allows himself to be unrestrained and runs wild, intolerant of criticisms, resentful of the least opposition, utterly disregardful of others' feelings and absolutely unamenable to advice and correction. All sense of discrimination, sane judgment and introspection vanish from him. Even the common courtesy and culture possessed by an ordinary worldly man take leave of the aspirant on account of his

presumption of spiritual advancement and growth in wisdom. He becomes disposed to attack even venerable and elderly persons and spiritually superior souls.

O Aspirants! Beware of these dangers in your spiritual life. Be vigilant always. Always regard yourself as a beginner just commencing Sadhana. Never underestimate the importance of Yama, Niyama of ethical culture and Sadhana-Chatushtaya! They are everything. Japa, Kirtan, Svadhyaya, Upasana should all be done side by side with this ethical training and character-building.

Without the latter, Sadhana becomes as fruitless as filling a vessel which is full of holes in the bottom. Without the eager and earnest desire to obey the Guru and improve oneself, without service, humility, sincerity, simplicity and eagerness to learn and improve oneself. Sadhana is useless like rowing a boat which is firmly anchored to the river-bed or like sowing seeds upon the rock.

Spirituality means growing into the form of Divine Ideal. It is the transformation of your nature from the human to the Divine. You can hope to achieve perfection only when you effect this transformation. It is purification and change of heart alone that make Dharana and Dhyana possible. To grow in Sattva, you must entirely destroy the Asuric side of your nature. Never imagine for a moment that you are anywhere near to the Goal unless and until you strive with earnestness and diligence to rid yourself of evil tendencies, get established in a pure Sattvic ethical character.

Remember this point clearly. Constantly reflect upon this. Meditate upon this. Know what true spirituality is. Fully realise the importance of becoming a changed man ethically and morally, before you can claim to be a Sadhaka. Carefully avoid the dangers of self-deception by constant vigilance and introspection. Do Sadhana regularly and pray for His Grace. Imagine

not that you have scaled the heights of spirituality. Patiently wait for the results. When your nature is changed, purified, and prepared, grace will flow down of itself in the firmament of your pure heart. Bliss and Ananda will spontaneously flow in and fill you when you have emptied yourself of all harshness, egoism, pride and passion. Perfection and immortality will be yours. Where there is kindness, humility, and purity, there spirituality springs up, saintliness shines, divinity descends and perfection manifests itself.

CHAPTER VII

DUTIES OF MAN

1. General Duties

The duty of a Brahmin is to study the Vedas and bear them in memory.

The duty of a Kshatriya is the protection of all creatures from wrong and oppression.

The duty of a Vaisya is agriculture and business.

The duty of the Sudra is to serve with humility, persons of the twice-born order, viz., Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas.

The duty of the preceptor is to make his disciple virtuous and help him to attain Self-realisation.

The duty of a disciple is to wait respectfully upon his preceptor for doing his bidding.

The duty of the professor is to make the student moral and virtuous.

The duty of the student is to obey the behests of his teacher or professor and follow his instructions.

The duty of the householder is to do good to all creatures.

The duty of the husband is to behave gently and properly towards his partner in life and attend to her wants and help her in all possible ways in the proper maintenance of family.

Chastity and obedience to the husband, training of children in the righteous path form the highest duty of the wife.

The duty of the employer is to look to the interests of the employed. He should not make them overwork. He should not tease them.

The duty of the employed is to do honest service to their employers and strive to increase his wealth and make him more and more prosperous.

The duty of the servant is to obey the commands of his master.

The duty of a king is to protect his people by supporting the good and punishing the wicked.

The duty of the subjects is to be loyal to the king.

The duty of the father is to make his son tread the path of the Truth.

The duty of the son is to obey the commands of his father and to keep up the prestige of his family and to do Sraaddha, oblations, etc., after his demise.

The duty of the Government is to make people happy and maintain law and order in the land.

The duty of the people is to cooperate with the Government in its working.

The duty of the employer is to give fair remuneration to the workers that labour for him. He should not take advantage of the poverty of the latter and exploit labour.

The duty of the worker is to give honest labour to the employer and be worthy of his trust.

The duty of the manufacturer is to give the best and durable articles to the public. He should not swindle the consumer with sham goods.

Lastly, everyone should remember that all duties, domestic, social and the like are only relative. The ultimate and chief duty of every human being is the attainment of Truth, God- realisation. The discharge of all duties is in reality to qualify man to do this highest duty.

2. The Duties of a Brahmachari

The Brahmachari should direct his entire attention solely to study and acquiring of such knowledge as would enable him to become a worthy member of society. During this period of study let him live either with his parents or at the place of his study under the supervision of teachers. He should not live by himself, with friends and acquaintances nor with relatives. A Brahmachari should not lose his seed. In case accidentally it so happens, he should immediately take cold water bath and repeat Gayatri or Omkara one thousand and eight times. The Brahmachari should respect his elders with devotion. He should daily perform his Sandhya-vandana, after prayers to the Sun, and perform Agnikarya. He should worship his Guru, worship cows and gods with due reverence.

The Brahmachari should have Japa as his highest possession. He should never leave Japa. Guru is the embodiment of all Vedas and all Devas. Therefore God and Guru should be taken as one and he should worship his Guru daily. He should serve his Guru and Guru's wife with faith and devotion for complete twelve years. He should never look at girls and should not talk with them. Looking creates a desire to go near them. Talking destroys the Brahmachari totally. Therefore the Brahmachari should be very strict in his movements and wanderings. He should never look at any object or anything that rouses lust in him. He should totally avoid contact, proximity or even thought of such things that give rise to impure feelings.

The Brahmachari should go to sleep after his Guru but should get up in the morning before his Guru gets up. He should chant loudly the sacred Vedas early in the morning and make the place sacred with the waves of spiritual sound. He should get for the Guru whatever he may want and should not grudge to do any sort of work.

The Brahmachari should serve his Guru with thought, word and deed with intense devotion.

The Brahmachari should not overeat. Overeating begets ill-health and that is a hindrance to all progress. Let him, therefore, avoid overeating. Let him take cold water bath daily in a river or a tank and keep his body free from all disease. Overeating shortens one's life, proves hostile to acts which lead to final blessedness, is sinful and is condemned by the wise. Therefore one should avoid overeating.

The Brahmachari should not indulge in fine arts. Fine arts create in him a passion for women and earthly enjoyments. He should not sing and dance, should not apply scents to his body, should not beautify his body with flowers and sandal-paste. Decoration of the body, singing and dancing create earthly attachments and therefore, they are fit to be shunned by the Brahmachari. He should not shave his hairs on the head etc., for beauty of the body, for it goes against Brahmacharya. He should not wear nice clothes, for beauty goes against Brahmacharya.

The Brahmachari should be of very good conduct. He should behave properly before elders and his study-mates. He should not have connections with people of the world. To the Brahmachari Gayatri Mantra is the sole refuge. Gayatri bestows health. Gayatri gives peace. Gayatri guides him in self-control. Gayatri leads him to the highest regions. Gayatri is everything for the Brahmachari. The Brahmachari should daily do Gayatri Japa one thousand and eight times.

Through Japa alone the Brahmachari attains success, no matter whether he performs any other Vedic sacrifice or not. Through the contact of his senses with their objects of gratification, he undoubtedly acquires sin. Hence, by controlling them, one achieves success. Control of the senses is possible for the Brahmachari only through Japa.

The Brahmachari should not desire for earthly objects. Never is desire extinguished by enjoying the objects. On the other hand, it increases like fire after pouring ghee over it. These senses, the Brahmachari should not try to suppress by force, for they cannot be controlled except by knowledge. The study of sacred scriptures, renunciation, the performance of religious sacrifices, self-control and devotional austerities, made by him who is wicked at heart can never be successful. Therefore, the Brahmachari should be pure at heart at all times.

The greatest duty of the Brahmachari is self-control. He who, having heard, touched, seen, eaten, or smelt anything whether good or bad, does not feel pleasure or pain, is said to have conquered his senses. Of all the senses, if only one sense manages to leak out, thereby, all his wisdom leaks out, like the water of a water-bladder through its only outlet. Without being asked, he should not speak anything to any person, nor should he speak if any question is put to him without decorum. In such cases, the intelligent one should behave like a dumb person.

Where there is no virtue or gain, or where there is no prospect of a counter-balancing service, there knowledge should not be imparted by the Guru, like a good seed in a barren soil. That Brahmachari who sits on a bed or cushion on which his preceptor used to sit, shall find no good prosperity either in this or the other world. At the arrival of the preceptor, he should stand up and prostrate before him with faith and devotion.

Of one's own progenitor and teacher of Wisdom, the teacher of Wisdom is superior to his progenitor, since the birth of a Brahmana through Knowledge is his eternal existence, both in this and the next world. The birth of a man through the lustful meeting of his parents in his mother's womb is the birth which he has in common with the beasts. The birth which the spiritual preceptor procreates for him is real, decayless, immortal.

Grey hairs do not make an old man. A young man, who has studied and has knowledge is really old. Elderliness is according to knowledge and not according to wealth or prowess or age.

Persecuted or oppressed he must not hurt the feelings of others. Let him wish or do no injury to anybody. Let him not use a harsh word that bars the gate of blessedness to anybody. Let him shun worldly honours, like poison throughout his life. Desiring immortality, let him court humiliation all through his life.

The highest Tapasya is study of the Veda and acquiring knowledge. During that penance, he should not apply oil to the body or wear garlands of flowers. While residing with his preceptor, he should control his senses and observe these rules of conduct for purpose of self-purification.

Let the Brahmachari be pure, let him forswear the use of honey, scents, garlands, and articles of sweet taste. Let him refrain from visiting women or killing animals. Let him renounce the use of anointments, collyriums, shoes, and umbrellas. Let him renounce lust, anger, greed, dancing, singing and music, gambling with dice, idle gossips, scandal, falsehood, embracing and casting lustful look on females. He must always sleep alone with pure thoughts. He should take all care to act according to the convenience of the preceptor and never of himself. He should always sit on a lower seat than the preceptor. Within the sight of his preceptor he should not sit in an easy or careless posture. He should not utter his preceptor's name even at his back, and should not mimic his gait, speech or voice.

The Brahmachari should not look direct at the preceptor's face, nor should he sit arrogantly before him. A student of twenty years old, or who has attained the age of discretion, shall not accost his preceptor's wife, if she be a youthful one. To defile men is the nature of

women, and hence the wise are never infatuated nor uncircumspect about them. Man, by nature, is subject to lust and anger. Women are competent to lead even the wise men astray, not to speak of fools who are their easy victims.

The Brahmachari shall not reside in a solitary place even with his own mother, sister or aunt. Powerful are the passions of man, and they sometimes overwhelm even the wise.

The preceptor is the living image of Brahman and his authority should not be questioned or doubted.

Let him acquire knowledge even from a Sudra, the highest virtue even from a man of vile caste, a good conduct even from an enemy, a good word even from an infant. Let him see good alone everywhere.

One who thus undeviatingly practises the vow of a Brahmachari obtains an excellent status, after death, and stands not under the necessity of reverting to human existence.

3. The Duties of a Householder (Grihastha)

The Brahmachari after finishing the course of his study in the house of the preceptor should either enter the forest for meditation on the Supreme or enter the household and marry a suitable girl. The householder (Grihastha) should earn money enough for his merest existence, by works which do not disgrace the social order he belongs to, and which do not entail much physical labour or hardship.

It is very difficult to live the life of a householder. The householder's life is prescribed to one who cannot control his passions. One without passions should revert to the path of Nivritti. The householder should not plunge himself exclusively in the welfare of his family. He has got to perform many sacred duties. He has to practise self-control. He should not become a slave of worldly enjoyments at any time.

The householder should either store up food-grains in his house, enough for three year's consumption of his family, or enough for a year's consumption of the family, or enough to support the family for three days, or only enough for the morrow.

Of these four kinds of householders, each succeeding one is more meritorious than the one immediately preceding inasmuch as on account of their comparatively greater poverty, they are compelled to practise self-abnegation (self-control), by which they are enabled to conquer the whole world.

Resting in contentment a seeker after happiness must restrain himself from pursuing more and more wealth. Happiness is rooted in contentment, misery is based on discontentment. By unremittingly discharging his duties alone, as ordained in the Vedas, to the best of his ability, one comes by the most elevated status.

He shall not earn money by acts which enthrall the senses of man, nor by means forbidden by the Vedas. In the event of his possessing money, or in want, one must not endeavour to earn money from any source, without discrimination. Let him not wilfully addict himself to any object of sense-gratification; in case of extreme attachment he must counteract it by means of his will-force.

The householder should not omit to perform Rishi-Yajna, Deva-Yajna, Bhuta-Yajna, Athithi-Yajna and Pitru-Yajna. The five offerings in connection with the Agnihotra sacrifices should be offered in the forepart of the day or night, or in the first or last part of the day, or in the first or last part of the night. At the close of the dark-fortnight he shall perform the Darsha sacrifice and at the close of the bright-fortnight the Purnimasi sacrifice. The fire consumes the vitality of the gluttonous Brahmana who partakes of food-grains for himself without offering it in sacrifice.

A householder shall give food to Brahmacharins who do not cook their meals, and after keeping enough food for his relations and dependants, he shall distribute the residue to birds and beasts. He should properly shave his hairs, wear clean clothes and keep himself neat and tidy. Even extremely heated, he must not visit his wife during the three forbidden days of her periods, nor share the same bed with her. Intellect, vigour, strength, eye-sight, and vitality of a man who goes unto a woman in her menses are impaired.

Wearing a single cloth he must not eat his meal, nor bathe stripped off all clothes. He must not pass urine or excreta on the road, or in a pasture ground, or on the ashes, or on a ploughed field, or in water, or in a cremation ground, or on a mountain, or in a dilapidated temple or on an ant-hill, or in an animal's hole; neither when walking nor staying nor having arrived at a river bank nor on the summit of a mountain. Facing the wind, the fire, the cow, the Brahmana, the sun, the water, the householder should not evacuate urine or excreta. If he does like this, he is robbed of his intellect.

He should not cast an unholy thing on the fire, nor warm his feet over it. Let him not blow a fire with his mouth, nor look at his naked wife. He must not restrain a cow from drinking water or suckling her calf if he sees her in the act, not shall he report it to anybody. An intelligent person, who has beheld a rainbow in the sky, must not show it to others.

Early in the morning he should get up with a holy thought, chanting the names of Lord Hari and singing of His glories through various hymns and prayers. He should then evacuate his bowels and wash his legs, hands and face. He should look at the sun and read the daily almanac. He should then take his bath in a river or a tank and perform his morning Sandhya-vandana and Arghya. He should do one thousand and eight Gayatri Mantra Japa, three times that of Narayana Ashtakshara Mantra and also Pranava Japa as much as he can. He

should supplement this by Panchakshara Japa and finish his Japa-yajna. He should then chant the Suryasukta and look at the sun and then again take his bath for the midday Puja of the five Devatas. At midday he should offer Vaisvadeva Bali and Vayasa Bali (to the crows). He should feed his guest at first and then take his meal with his family. He should daily read the Bhagavata, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana for the welfare of his family, both here and hereafter. At night, he should once again start his evening Sandhya-vandana and do Japa accordingly. He should take only one meal at midday if he wants good health. Betel leaves should be chewed after food every day without fail. He should walk after food about hundred yards doing Japa. He should not overeat. He should eat only half-belly. He should sleep always on the left side facing the east or the south. He should not sleep during the daytime. Sleeping during daytime begets ill-health. He should not sleep for more than six hours in the night.

The householder should not play with dice and should not gamble. He should not eat like a slow ass and should not keep his plate of food on a cushion, etc. He should eat with feet wet, but he must lie down for sleep with feet dry at night. He should not give any worldly advice or Vedic instructions to a Sudra who is unfit to receive such advice. He should not bathe without wetting his head, should not scratch his head with the nails, should not accept the gift of a king who is not the son of a Kshatriya, nor from a meat-seller, nor a wine-seller, nor a prostitute.

The Veda is the holiest and the most sacred thing in the whole world. The Veda should not be chanted indiscriminately. The Veda should be preserved like his own self, for there is nothing in all the worlds that is greater than the Veda.

He should not bathe after eating, nor while ill, nor at midnight, nor with a large number of clothes, nor in an unknown tank or reservoir of water. Let him not

disparage himself on account of his past failure or misfortunes. Let him pursue fortune even to the last day of his life and never think anything to be beyond his reach.

He must speak truth, and truth that is pleasant; he must not speak an unpleasant truth nor a pleasant lie. This is the eternal virtue. Even in cases of ungentle dealings he must always say, "That's good, that's good, good, good" to all. He must not engage in futile quarrel, nor create a barren enmity with any person. Persons possessing limbs in less or excess, old men, illiterate persons, those devoid of personal beauty and worldly possessions, and men of low birth, he must not taunt for their unfortunate deformities or privations. Above all let him diligently study the Vedas for that is the highest duty of a Brahmana, all others are merely minor or accessory duties.

Remembrances of his past births make him apathetic to the world and its concerns, and lead him to attain the Supreme Brahman and by existing in this Supreme Self, he enjoys infinite and eternal happiness. Constant study of the Vedas, cleanliness of the body and mind, contemplation, austerities and compassion towards all creatures are what bring to a man the remembrances of his past existences.

In the next world, neither his wife and children nor his parents and relations will be of any avail; it is virtue alone that stands by him in the other world. Alone a man comes into being; alone does he meet his death; alone he enjoys the merits of his good deeds, and the consequence of his misdeeds he suffers alone. He leaves behind him his dead body like a log of wood, or a clod of earth, on the ground, and his friends, and relations go away turning their backs on it. It is virtue alone that follows him till the end.

4. The Duties of a Vanaprastha

Having duly discharged the duties of a householder, a Brahmana with all passions of his heart sobered and tranquillised, shall live, self-controlled, in the forest. He should renounce the use of all kinds of food-grains, all kinds of nice clothes and vehicles, and placing his wife under the protection of his son, or in her company, he should take refuge in the wood.

He should perform the five great sacrifices in the wood with the food-grain used by Munis, roots, tubers and fruits of the forest. He should not shave any part of his body, should wear only barks of wood and should not cut his nails. Out of his own food he should feed the guests that may happen to come to his place of residence in the wood, and he should not receive gifts from anyone in the world. He must do the Agnihotra even in the stage of Vanaprastha, and he should avoid the conveniences and luxuries of a householder.

He must store up food enough for a day's, month's, half year's, or a year's use. Or he shall live as per the Chandrayana penance, or he shall live only on fruits, roots and flowers. He should either stroll on the ground or stand on the tips of his toes during the day, or gently ramble in the place of his staying, and bathe in the morning, noon and evening. In summer he should practise the five penances, lie in the open during the rainy season, and wear wet clothes in the foreparts of winter. Thus gradually he should increase his penitential austerities. Installing the sacrificial fire on his self, as is practised by the forest-dwelling hermits, he must observe the vow of silence, and houseless and unpossessed of fire, he must live on fruits and edible roots.

Apathetic to the objects of pleasure, and content, he must lie on the bare ground, knowing no other house than the tree-shade, and caring not for any other place of refuge. He shall collect his food even from the

neighbouring village if necessary, but he should not become a burden to the householders at any cost. He shall read the Upanishads and make his mind free of all desires and anxieties. On the advent of an incurable disease, he should, living on air and water, and with his Self rooted in Yoga, go straight to the North-east until he quits his mortal coil. Thus the glorious Brahmana reaches the regions of Brahma.

The Vanaprastha should have the attainment of Immortality as the Goal and spend his time in preparing for the life of absolute Sannyasa.

The strict scriptural ideal of the Vanaprastha may not be quite possible to follow to the very letter at the present day. Man has not the same robustness of health and hardihood, the same endurance, strength of frame and iron constitution as the ancestors. If a purely jungle-life in complete seclusion is not possible, the Vanaprastha must retire to a quiet village or a place of pilgrimage or a holy Tirtha. He must live there upon a simple diet of plain bread and vegetable or even milk and fruit. He must be extremely simple in his habits. He must reduce his wants to the minimum, be devoid of luxury, and observe austerity in food, sleep, dress and all habits as much as possible. The highest ideal must be always in his mind and within the capacity of his prowess he should strive to adhere rigidly to the true ideal.

5. The Duties of a Sannyasin

Tired with the mundane life of the world, and striving for the realisation and correct knowledge of the Self, pondering over the Wisdom of the Upanishads which appertain to the science of Brahman, a really wise man should abandon his home and take to the life of asceticism (Sannyasa). Those Brahmanas who declaring protection to all creatures, leave their homes and take to asceticism, attain the effulgent regions.

Alone and unfriended, the Sannyasi should roam about for working out the emancipation of his Self. Houseless, bereft of the sacred fire, desireless, indifferent and speechless, he should maintain perfect equanimity. He should not have distinction of friends and foes. Life and death he must not court; like a servant waiting for the receipt of his salary he must patiently bid the time of emancipation.

With his sight, he must purify his each footstep, speak the speech which truth has purified and do only that which his inner conscience may approve of. Dispassionately he must bear with revilers, without offering affront to any one. He should not, for the sake of this frail and pathogenic body, create enmity with any person whomsoever.

Always contemplating upon Brahman, non-attached to anything of the world, and desiring nothing both here and hereafter, he should, in the company of his self alone, roam about in the world, for the bliss of emancipation. He must not desire to obtain gifts by reading portends and omens, nor by practising divination or astrology, nor by reading physiognomy, nor by interpreting and preaching Sastras. He must not live in a place crowded by hermits, Brahmanas, birds, beggars and others. He should court peace and live in peace, for peace is bliss and peace is his ideal.

Vessels made of gourds, wood, earth or bamboo, should be used by the fourth order of ascetics (Yatis). Once a day, he should stroll out for begging alms and refrain from attempting to secure a large quantity of foodstuff. By begging through attachment to a larger alms-collecting, a Yati may ultimately become attached to things of the senses. After the hearths of householders have ceased to emit smoke, after pestles and mortars have been laid aside for the day, after the hearth-fires have been extinguished, after the householders have all eaten their meals, and plates with leavings have been

cast away, then should an ascetic (Sannyasi) stroll out for alms, each day in the afternoon.

He must not be sorry, if he obtains no alms, nor rejoice at its receipt. He should abandon Bhiksha given in honour, for, by such glorifying Bhiksha a Yati, though emancipated, is enchained again through Maya. By taking small food and residing in solitude, he must withdraw his senses from their attracting objects of the world.

The Sannyasi has only three duties to perform, Saucha, Bhiksha and Dhyana, ever wandering from place to place.

By restraining the senses, by annihilating desire and aversion, by extending compassion to all creatures, by seeing the Eternal Being existing everywhere, a Sannyasi attains Immortality.

In order that he may not be attracted at any time by the world and its contents, the Sannyasi should ponder over the sufferings of human life, brought about through the effect of evil deeds and evil thoughts, such as the consignment of souls to the tortures of debased perdition and the dreadful sufferings therein to be endured; on separation from objects of desire and association with those who are loathsome, on the ravages of age and imbecility and affliction from diseases; on the exit of the soul from the body and its rebirth in another womb after death, and on the transmigration of this inner spirit through tens of millions of wombs; on the affliction which is endured by all embodied creatures through the predominance of sin and on the eternal bliss they enjoy through the effect of their good deeds.

By means of Yoga, the Sannyasi should comprehend the disembodied Self of the Supreme Brahman, which in Its gross form, runs through all types of living beings, good or bad, high or low. Placed in whatever station or society, and howsoever defiled, he should practise virtue and should be equally indifferent to all creatures. The

mere garb of holy order is no virtue. As burning metals are purged of their dross, so the impurities of the senses are burnt off by practising the discriminative meditation on Brahman.

The Sannyasi should burn down the defects of his senses with Pranayama; sin, by concentrating his mind on the Self; attachment to the world, by withdrawing the senses from the external objects; and undivine attributes of his self, by means of Divine Meditation. The all-pervadingness of this Inner Self which runs through all creatures, whether high or low, is unintelligible to untrained and uncultured intellects; let him witness this Existence-Knowledge-Bliss by means of profound Meditation.

Him, who has fully witnessed this Supreme State of Being, the Self, the actions do not bind; without this knowledge, man shall revert to this mortal world.

Supported by the pillars of bones, bound by ligaments, plastered over with flesh and blood, and covered with skin, this body should be understood as the foul-smelling refuge of urine and excreta. He shall have to quit this bodily frame, subject to age and imbecility, the abode of diseases, afflicted with pain and suffering, the transitory embodiment of material elements, characterised by the impure quality of Rajas.

As a tree tumbles down from the bank of a river, as a bird quits a tree at daybreak, so the self, like an aquatic animal freed from the jaws of a monstrous crocodile with the greatest difficulty, becomes liberated from this delusion of a body. Thus by gradually abandoning all associations, and becoming free from pairs of opposites, his self shall merge in the Great Brahman.

All these latent possibilities of his nature such as the knowledge of the Supreme Brahman, extinction of all feelings of 'I' or 'Mine', etc., become patent only through the practice of unbroken meditation on the Supreme Brahman at all times; he who has not acquired this

knowledge of the identity of the individual with the Supreme Brahman will not obtain the highest good through mere dull meditation.

He must constantly mutter the sacred Mantras related to the Wisdom of Brahman and the sentences of the Vedantas which treat of the Eternal Truth. The Brahman is the refuge of the all-knowing as well as ignorant beings. It is the final Goal of the aspirations of all who wish to become Immortal.

Bereft of all work, indifferent to the pleasures of heaven as factors of embodiment and enchainment, on account of the privilege of witnessing the Self, and by constantly brooding over the Supreme Brahman, the wise one attains the Highest Bliss.

CHAPTER VIII

ETHICAL TEACHINGS

1. Morality—The Basis of Spiritual Life

1. Morality is the basis of things. Morality is the basis of spiritual life. It is the basis of Yoga. Truth or Brahman is the substance of all morality. Practice of morality leads to purity of heart, and attainment of Self-realisation. Without morality, you will become a spiritual bankrupt.

2. Without ethical perfection, there is no spiritual progress. Without spiritual progress, there is no emancipation. Ethical perfection comes through the practice of Yama and Niyama. Asanas and Pranayamas form the second stage. Concentration and meditation form the third step. Samadhi is the summum bonum. Thus the human soul aspiring after perfection goes from stage to stage and finally merges itself in the blissful glory of the highest union. Aim, therefore, at moral perfection. Spiritual success is half achieved through strong moral foundation.

3. Always bear in mind that the primary condition of success in the spiritual life is an earnest longing for purity. So be sincere and very earnest in your Sadhana and strive for purification and sound ethical culture. Sing the glories and most powerful names of the Lord. It will fill you with peace supreme, and devotion will dwell in your purified heart. Evil thoughts are as sinful as evil deeds. The path of virtue lies straight before you. Be sufficiently watchful and exert with faith.

2. Dharma Confers Wealth and Happiness

4. What is Bhagavad Dharma? That which takes you to the Lord, that which enables you to kill your Vasanas, egoism, likes and dislikes is Bhagavad Dharma. That which frees you from the round of births and deaths, that which makes you fearless, desireless and 'I-less', is Bhagavad Dharma. That which fills your heart with devotion to Lord Krishna, that which enables you to behold the one Supreme Tattva, Lord Krishna, everywhere, is Bhagavad Dharma.

5. Practice of compassion, humility, straightforwardness is Samanya Dharma (ordinary duty) of man. Srauta-smarta Karmas such as Agnihotra, etc., are his Visesha Dharma to purify the heart.

6. Dharma indeed is supreme in this world. In Dharma is truth rooted (Dharme Satyam Pratishthitam). Therefore practise Dharma. The practice of Dharma will lead you to the attainment of the final emancipation.

7. Hold fast to the lamp of Dharma. Strive ceaselessly to do good to others. Entertain thoughts of love. Allay the flames of lust, greed and anger. Become a physician of the soul. Sit motionless and calm. Enjoy the peace of the Eternal.

8. Out of righteousness (Dharma) springs wealth. Out of rigtheousness springs happiness. Through righteousness, one obtains everything. This world has righteousness as its essence.

9. Do not oppose righteousness for gain, for the gratification of your senses. Eschew untruthfulness, inattention, anger, procrastination, evil company, idleness, gratification of the senses.

10. Those who put on the appearance of righteous men are more sinful than the unrighteous. They will have to undergo great miseries.

11. The course of morality is very subtle indeed. Even the great sages fail to understand it always. What a

strong man says in this world is morality and is considered as such by others, though it may not be really so, while what a weak man says is immorality and is regarded as such even if it be the highest morality. Follow the path trodden by great souls. This will be your guide.

3. Character Is Power

12. Character is power. Characterlessness is practically death. Character is made by Karma. Character makes the will.

13. Character is the ornament of the virtuous. Character is the real protection and ornament of a woman.

14. Your character, your future is built by your thoughts and deeds. As you think, so shall you become. If you think nobly, you will be born with a noble character. If you think badly, you will be born with a bad character. This is the immutable law of nature. Change your mode of thought and mental attitude from this very minute. Develop right thinking. Have pure Sattvic desire. Thought transformed will transform your life.

15. Do good actions. Entertain sublime, divine thoughts and build your character. Have one pure, holy desire, the desire for liberation from the wheel of birth and death. Root out hatred. Radiate love and compassion. Pure Prem alone can overcome hatred and enmity. True selfless love is the greatest redeeming and unifying force in the universe. See and feel the presence of the Atman in all things.

16. Your character depends upon the quality of thoughts held in your mind and the mental pictures of ideals entertained by you. If your thoughts are of a base nature, you will have a bad character. If you entertain noble thoughts, sublime ideals and holy pictures, you will have a magnanimous character. You will have a magnetic personality. You will be a centre of joy, power and peace. If you develop the practice of cultivating

sublime divine thoughts, all base thoughts will perish by themselves gradually. Just as darkness cannot stand before the sun, so also evil thoughts cannot stand before the sublime thoughts.

17. More than the moral lessons taught in schools is the training which the children receive at home. If the parents take care of the development of character in their own children, the moral lessons will be like the good seeds sown on fertile soil. When children grow up to youth and manhood they will become ideal men.

18. Father and mother are only responsible for the character of their children. If the parents are irreligious, their children also become irreligious. It is the onerous duty of parents to give their children religious training in their boyhood. They should themselves lead the Divine Life. When religious Samskaras are lodged in boyhood, they will strike deep root, blossom and bear fruit when they attain manhood.

19. There is no religion higher than virtue. Virtue brings peace. Virtue is greater than life and prosperity. Virtue is the gateway to Bliss. Therefore be virtuous always. Let virtue be your mainstay.

20. Courage is that quality of mind which enables one to encounter danger and difficulties with firmness or without fear or fainting of heart. Valour, intrepidity, boldness are synonymous terms. It is a positive attribute of the mind. This quality is very necessary for material and spiritual progress. A coward dies many times before he actually leaves this physical body. Honesty and justice are linked with courage. There are people who have exhibited physical courage during combat, but who have shown but very little moral courage in matters of principle. Moral courage is an attribute of the soul. It comes from the source within.

4. The Power of Ahimsa

21. Ahimsa is supreme love. Ahimsa is soul-force. Ahimsa is Divine Life. Hate melts in the presence of love. Hate dissolves in the presence of Ahimsa. There is no power greater than Ahimsa. The practice of Ahimsa develops will-power to a considerable degree. The practice of Ahimsa will make you fearless. He who practises Ahimsa with real faith can move the whole world, can tame wild animals, can win the hearts of all and can subdue his enemies. He can do and undo things. The power of Ahimsa is ineffable. Its glory is indescribable. Its greatness is inscrutable. The force of Ahimsa is infinitely more wonderful and subtle than electricity or magnetism.

5. Truth Alone Reigns Supreme

22. Truth alone reigns supreme but not untruth. Truth alone triumphs but not falsehood. Dharma is rooted in Truth. Sages reach the immortal abode where the Supreme Seat of Truth is situated. They cease to speak or think of anything else.

23. Truth is nobody's property. Truth is not the property of any particular sect, creed or religion. This is the property of everybody and is the same for all.

24. Be truthful. Truth stands even when there is no public support. Truth is the gateway to the kingdom of God. Draw inspiration from the lives of saints who lead a life of truth and penance.

25. Satyam (Truth) is the seed. Brahmacharya (celibacy) is the root. Meditation is the shower. Santi or peace is the flower. Moksha or salvation is the fruit. Therefore speak the truth, practise Brahmacharya and meditation. Cultivate Santi. You will surely attain the final emancipation or freedom from the trammels of birth and death and enjoy eternal bliss, supreme peace, perennial joy and immortality.

26. O Ram, speak truth at all costs. See Radha in all women. Be humble as a blade of grass. Be kind. Be good. Do good. Sing always Krishna's Name. Let 'Om Namo Bhagavate Vaasudevaya' be always on your lips. May Lord Krishna protect you.

27. Do not grieve. O Beloved Kaivalya! Do not despair. Nil desperandum. Tread the path of Truth and righteousness. Stick tenaciously to the twenty instructions. Be regular in your meditation. Never cease to strive. You will reach the goal soon. The way to freedom or Moksha is thrown open to you now.

6. When Man Becomes One with the Divine

28. Man is a mixture of three ingredients, viz., human element, brutal instinct and divine ray. He is endowed with finite intellect, perishable body, a little knowledge and a little power. This makes him distinctly human. Lust, anger, hatred belong to his brutal nature. The reflection of cosmic intelligence is at the back of his intellect. So he is an image of God. When the brutal instincts die, when his ignorance is rent asunder, when he is able to bear insult and injury, he becomes one with the Divine.

29. The conquest of the lower self is the conquest of the world.

30. Lasciviousness of the Gandharvas, anger of the serpents, timidity of deers, hunger of vultures, ferocity of tigers, gentleness of cows, cunningness of the jackals are most dominant. Each possesses only one vicious quality. But man is a complex animal. He possesses countless evil traits. It is difficult to describe him. He is a horrible compound of so many evil qualities.

31. Passion, egoism, jealousy, pride, hatred are very, very deep-rooted. If you cut the branches of a tree, again after some time they grow. Even so these Vrittis are suppressed or thinned out for some time, they manifest

again after some time. They should be completely rooted out by strenuous efforts, Vichara, meditation, etc.

32. Worry, depression, unholy thoughts, anger and hatred produce a kind of crust or dark layer on the surface of the mind or astral body. This crust prevents the beneficial influences to get entry inside and allows the evil forces or lower influences to operate. Worry does great harm in the astral body and the mind. Energy is wasted by worry. Nothing is gained by worrying. It causes inflammation of the astral body and drains the vitality of man. It should be eradicated by vigilant introspection and keeping the mind fully occupied.

33. Self-sufficiency, impertinence, pride, luxury, name, fame, self-assertive nature, obstinacy, idea of superiority, sensual desires, evil company, laziness, overwork, too much mixing and too much talk are some of the obstacles in the path of Yoga. Admit your faults freely. When you are free from all these evil traits, Samadhi will come by itself.

34. Pride, self-sufficiency, arrogance, self-assertive Rajasic nature, irritability, curiosity about the affairs of other people, hypocrisy, are all obstacles in meditation. Subtle forms of these evil Vrittis lurk in the mind. They operate as oceanic under-currents. Under the pressure of Yoga and meditation various sorts of dirts in the mind come out, just as dirt of a room that is shut up for six months, comes out when you carefully sweep. Aspirants should introspect and watch their minds. They should remove them one by one applying suitable, effective methods. Pride is inveterate. Its branches ramify in all directions in the regions of the Rajasic mind. Again and again it manifests, although the wave subsides temporarily for some time.

35. To be jealous is mean, to be selfish is ignoble, to be compassionate is divine, to be patient and enduring is manly, to be contented and happy is wise, to be serene is glorious, to be dispassionate is praiseworthy and to be

equanimous is laudable. Therefore eradicate jealousy, selfishness and cultivate the divine virtues. You will soon attain Godhead.

36. If you are endowed with good character, Brahmacharya, truthfulness, mercy, pure love, tolerance, forgiveness, serenity, these qualities will more than counter-balance many evil qualities you may possess. Gradually these evil qualities also will vanish if you are careful, if you focus your attention on them.

37. If you are endowed with good character, Brahmacharya, decision, far-sightedness, discernment, alacrity, the faculty of "Daksha" (expertness) which will help you to decide a right line of action when you are in a dilemma, then only you will be able to find out what is exactly required at the critical juncture or at right time but not an hour afterwards. You will not regret afterwards in any way.

38. If the aspirant is capable of being offended easily for trifling things, he cannot make any progress in meditation. He should cultivate amiable loving nature and adaptability. Then this bad trait will vanish. Some aspirants get easily offended if their bad qualities and defects are pointed out. They become indignant and begin to fight with the man who points out the defects. They think that the man is concocting their defects out of jealousy or hatred. A man who has no life of introspection, whose mind is of out-going tendencies (Bahirmukha-Vritti), cannot find out his own mistakes. The self-conceit acts as a veil and blurs the mental vision. If an aspirant wants to grow, he must admit his defects if they are pointed out. He must try his level best to eradicate them and must thank the man who points out his defects. Then only he can grow in spirituality.

39. Be on the alert. Be vigilant. Be bold. Be cheerful. Be pure. Be kind. Be humble. Be patient. Do not miss the ideal. Keep the vision of your goal clear before your eyes. Live every moment to realise the ideal in life. Correct your

mistakes. Realise the Self through direct intuitive experience.

40. If you remove selfishness, greed, lust, anger, jealousy, pride, egoism, you will feel, beyond shadow of doubt, that God exists. Do not enter into heated discussions with people. Remove these evil qualities first. Then Divine Light will dawn by itself in your heart.

41. The salt of life is selfless service. The bread of life is universal love. The water of life is purity. The sweetness of life is devotion. The fragrance of life is generosity. The pivot of life is meditation. The goal of life is emancipation or Moksha.

7. Importance of Brahmacharya

42. Chastity or continence is an integral part of Yoga. It is an indispensable factor for the aspirants to divine union or blissful Samadhi. You cannot attain great heights of spirituality without chastity. Chastity or Brahmacharya lies at the very heart of Tapasya or Yoga.

43. Brahmacharya means literally, Achara or conduct that leads to the realisation of Brahman or one's own immortal Self. Its technical meaning is self-restraint, particularly mastery or perfect control over the sexual organ or freedom from lust in thought, word and deed.

44. Sexual Vasanas are more powerful than all other Vasanas. Therefore you will have to direct all your efforts in subduing the sexual Vasanas and the reproductive organ first.

45. Men are swayed by lust. They lose their sense of righteousness and of time and place. They never discriminate between right and wrong. They lose all sense of shame.

46. A lustful look itself is break in Brahmacharya. There is internal discharge. Veerya is separated from the system.

47. Abstinence or continence is the corner-stone on which the pedestal of Moksha stands. If the foundation is not very strong, the superstructure will fall down when there is heavy rain. Even so if you are not established in Brahmacharya, if your mind is agitated by sexual thoughts, you will fall down. You cannot reach the summit of the ladder of Yoga or the highest Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

48. If a man is lustful in his conduct, he can be known from his postures, gazing, eating, work, state of his mind, etc.

49. Three evils born of passion exist in this world. Uttering a falsehood is the first. The two others which are more heinous, are intercourse with another man's wife and the infliction of cruelty in the absence of enmity.

50. Cunningness, deceitfulness, pride, evil desire, covetousness, discontentedness, lasciviousness, frivolity, these and other states are found abundantly in one who is lustful.

51. The beginning of saintliness is killing of egoism or Ahamkara, the end of saintliness is eternal life. The key to saintliness is Brahmacharya. The light of saintliness is universal love. The garb of saintliness is virtue. The mark of saintliness is equal vision. The Kasoti or touch-stone of saintliness is humility. The road to saintliness is regular meditation. The foundation of saintliness is Yama and Niyama.

52. Of what avail is knowledge of the Universities and titles, of what avail is life, of what avail is Japa or meditation or enquiry of 'Who am I' if you become a slave of lust or women? Control this mischievous Indriya first by rigorous Tapas before you take to rigorous meditation. First become at least a strict physical Brahmachari. Then endeavour to have mental Brahmacharya.

53. Your actions must support your character. Your ideals must lead you to the highest. Stake not the

stomach for half a plate of rice, your independence for the sexual Life.

54. Householders who are treading the path of Truth and who are doing spiritual Sadhana should observe perfect celibacy. A sexual contact revives all bad ideas and gives them a new lease of life.

55. If you want to practise Brahmacharya, think and feel that your wife is your sister. Destroy the idea of husband and wife and develop the idea of brother and sister. You both will develop pure and strong love because the impurity of lust will be removed. Talk to her always on spiritual matters. Narrate to her stories from the Mahabharata, the Bhagavata. Sit with her on holidays and read some religious book. Gradually her mind will be changed. She will take interest and delight in spirituality. Put this in practice if you want to get rid of the miseries of Samsara and enjoy the eternal bliss of the Soul.

56. Parents should not force marriage on their sons. They should not stamp out the spiritual Samskaras of their children.

57. Brahmacharya does not mean to shut oneself out from the worldly temptation, but to sublimate and spiritualise the sex-energy and to offer it as a pure and humble dedication to the service of God and man, keeping the ideal of Hanuman and Bhishma in view.

58. Lustful look, lustful thinking, wet-dreams are all failures or breaks in Brahmacharya. Be chaste in your look. Give up Drishti-dosha (lustful look). See mother in all women. Cultivate sublime, divine thoughts. Do Japa and meditation regularly. You will be established in Brahmacharya.

59. Those who practise Brahmacharya should control the sexual gazing impulse or Skoptophilia. This kind of impulse is a great menace as it will stimulate curiosity and sexual desire. There is no harm in looking at a beautiful object. You will have to develop the divine

Bhava. You will have to feel that everything is a manifestation of God. If there is impurity behind the gaze, it is tantamount to adultery. Purify your thoughts and feelings. Purity is Brahman. Thou art pure in essence. Thou art an embodiment of purity. O Ram! Repeat the formula mentally: "Suddhoham; Suddhoham—I am purity; I am purity" and attain that state of pristine, matchless purity.

60. Make the mind understand by repeated hammering and Vichara that all sexual pleasures are false, utterly worthless and extremely harmful. Clearly think over how very illusory and full of pain it is. On no account should you listen to the promptings of the impure mind. Place before the mind the glory and advantage of a life in the eternal and all-blissful, Omniscient Atman.

61. Lust deals a deadly blow to spiritual Sadhana. Kill this lust by diverse methods. Do not entertain thoughts of women. Do not look at figures that create the mental sensation of passion. Avoid going to cinemas. Do not mix with all sorts of people, people who take pleasure in speaking of women, their character, love, nature, etc. Think of the Lord when the idea of sex enters the mind. Pray to Him fervently.

8. Disastrous Consequences of Anger

62. A terrible fit of anger shatters the physical nervous system and produces a deep and lasting impression on the inner astral body. Dark arrows will shoot from the astral body. The germs that caused an epidemic may die, but the wave of influenza continues in various parts for a long time. Even so, though the effect of the fit of anger in the mind may subside in a short time, the vibration or wave continues to exist for days and weeks together in the Linga Sarira or astral body. Slight unpleasant feeling that lasts in the mind for five minutes may produce deep inflammation of the astral body. It will take several months for the healing of the

ulcer. Have you realised now the disastrous consequences of anger? Do not become a victim to anger. Control it by Kshama, love, mercy, sympathy, Vichara and consideration for others.

63. Even slight annoyance and irritability affects the mind and astral body. Aspirants should not allow these evil Vrittis to manifest in the mind-lake. They may burst out as big waves of anger at any moment, if you are careless and weak. They should be nipped in the bud, by forgiveness, love and sympathy for others. There should not be the least disturbance in the mind-lake. It should be perfectly calm and serene. Then only meditation is possible.

64. Hatred has no real existence, because it is a negative Vikara of mind. Love alone exists. Love is God. Untruth has no real existence because it is a negative Vikara. Truth always exists. Truth is God.

65. It is very difficult to control anger. Anger is a manifestation of Sakti. First try to reduce its force (Vega), its frequency and duration. Endeavour to attenuate or thin out this formidable modification or Vritti. Do not allow it to assume the form of a big wave on the surface of the conscious mind. Nip it in the bud when it is in the form of irritability in the subconscious mind. Divert the mind now. Entertain divine thoughts. Do rigorous Japa or Kirtan. Repeat some prayers or Slokas of the Bhagavad Gita, the Ramayana or the Upanishads. Develop gradually the opposite positive divine virtues such as patience, love, forgiveness. Anger will gradually die by itself. It is very difficult to fight against it directly. It is easy to control anger when it is in the form of mild irritability.

66. In worldly-minded, emotional people, the modification of anger exists in a very expanded state (Udaara Avastha). They are thrown into a state of explosive fury for trifling things. They cannot control anger even a bit. Their bodies will tremble when they

become angry; their eyes will become red, they will bite their lips. There will be intense burning in their hearts. That state will continue for hours together. They will even kill their opponents. They do not know what they are doing.

67. If the emotion of love prevails in the mind, you cannot have the emotion of anger at the same time and vice versa. The effects of good or Sattvic emotions persist for a longer time than the effects of evil emotions.

68. If a man's mind is filled with hatred, he does not see the real merit of another. He will exaggerate his fault, though it is a small one. Anger, malice, hypocrisy, rivalry, envy, meanness—these and other states manifest in one who has hatred in his mind.

69. Do not cause pain or suffering in any living being from greed, selfishness, irritability, annoyance. Give up anger or ill-will. Give up the spirit of fighting, and heated debates. Do not argue. If you quarrel with somebody or if you have a heated debate with anybody, you cannot meditate for 3 or 4 days. Your balance of mind will be upset. Much energy will be wasted in useless channels. The blood will become hot. The nerves will be shattered. You must try your level best to keep a serene mind always. Meditation can proceed from a serene mind only. A serene mind is a valuable spiritual asset for you.

70. Blessed are those high-souled people who can control their anger by dint of their pure and strong will and intellect, like fire quenched by water. What evil cannot be effected by anger? An angry person can even kill the worshipful and vilify the pious with rude expressions. The angry man cannot decide what to speak and what not to utter. There is no sin that cannot be committed by him. He is a real man who can cast off his anger as the snakes cast off their sloughs.

71. Be serene and tranquil under all circumstances. Cultivate this virtue, Sama, again and again through

constant and strenuous endeavour. Serenity is like a rock. Waves of irritation may dash on it, but cannot affect it. Meditate daily on the ever-tranquil Atman or the Eternal which is unchanging. You will attain this sublime virtue gradually. The divine light will descend on a calm mind only. An aspirant with a calm mind only can enter into deep meditation and Nirvikalpa Samadhi. He only can practise Nishkamya Karma Yoga. It is easy to do evil for evil, to do good for good but it is difficult and sublime to do good for evil. The downward path to evil is very easy, but the upward path to good is very difficult, thorny and precipitous. Those who are endowed with strength, wisdom in order to do good for evil, are indeed blessed people. They are veritable gods on earth.

9. Control of Anger

72. Take refuge in the name of the Lord. Do Japa daily. Sing His Name. You will gain immense inner spiritual strength. Practice of Pranayama also will help you in the control of anger. Be on the alert. Remain as a Sakshi. Do not identify yourself with the Vritti, anger.

73. When you try to control anger, when somebody has injured you, you should not only check the big wave of anger, but also try to eradicate the internal burning which remains even though you do not speak any harsh word or express outwardly any sign of anger.

74. Control the big wave of anger first. If you are not able to control it, cut short its duration. Control of the big wave of anger will give you strength to control irritability or sharp temper. Irritability is a smaller wave only. Pray and watch. Develop patience and forgiveness. This small wave also will vanish. You will enjoy supreme peace.

75. Gradually the burning caused by anger will subside. The force born of anger (Vega) will gradually lose its intensity. The attacks will not persist for a long time. The spiritual strength born of Nirodha Samskaras

(Sattvic controlling potencies) will come to your aid. The mind will become calmer gradually.

76. Anger can be burnt in toto only by Nirvikalpa Samadhi or Knowledge of Self. If you thin out this evil Vritti through regular Japa and meditation, enquiry, etc., if you mitigate its force, it will not do any havoc. It will be like a cobra whose poisonous fangs are rooted out. It may raise its hood and hiss sometimes, but it can be controlled quite easily.

77. The effect of hate is repulsion. The effect of Raga is attraction. If you are attached to a certain man, you feel inclined to attend on him and serve him; if you dislike or hate a man, you feel disinclined to wait upon him and serve him. Attraction and repulsion are Vrittis of the mind. Go above attraction and repulsion and rest peacefully in your own Atman where there is neither attraction nor repulsion.

78. There is nothing really good or bad in this world. Only thinking or imagination makes it so. All these phenomena and diversities, all these seeming contradictions and this interplay of good and bad are the workings of the mysterious Maya. The moment you penetrate this stiff veil, all the knotty problems will be solved for you. To a realised sage there is nothing bad. Samsara vanishes for him. He becomes one with Brahman or the Infinite.

79. If you entertain some dislike for anybody, it also spreads its root deep in the subconscious mind and gradually grows into a big tree. Your duty, therefore, lies in loving one and all and in hating none.

80. Restrain the senses. Annihilate Raga-Dvesha (like and dislike). Extend compassion to all creatures. You will soon attain Immortality.

81. If you really want to root out hatred and develop Prem or pure love, you will have to serve that man who is planning to destroy you. When you hear that your bitterest enemy is sick, you will have to run immediately

to his house and shampoo his legs with full Prem. You will have to attend on him day and night, just as you attend on your sick wife, son or mother. This is doubtless a trying, difficult Sadhana. But the benefits are wonderful. You will become a centre of power and energy.

82. It is easy to contract friendship, but it is difficult to maintain it owing to the fickleness of mind. A very slight cause may bring about a rupture. You must be very careful.

83. When your friendship with some other person terminates by some slight rupture, quarrel or misunderstanding, you should never, never advertise and circulate the evil qualities or wrong doings of your friend whom you have loved for a long time. If you do so, this will bring harm to yourself and to your friend. Drop the matter at once. Forget all about the unhappy incident. Always speak well of anybody. Speak well even of that man who has done serious injury to you. You will help that man. This is nobility. This is the nature of a Mahatma. Even if you are a worldly man now, you must become a Mahatma in this very life, in a short time.

10. Selfishness Retards Progress

84. Selfishness is the source of all vices. It is born of ignorance. A selfish man is greedy and unrighteous. He is far from God. He will do anything to attain his ends. He injures others, robs their properties and does many sinful actions to satisfy his selfishness. He has neither scruples nor character. Peace of mind is unknown to him. He is always planning and scheming for acquisition of wealth, power, name and fame. He always separates himself from others. He is very much attached to his wife, children and property. Attachment and sense of separateness are present in him to a maximum degree. Selfishness is a great impediment to Yoga. Destroy selfishness through selfless service, charity, Satsanga.

85. Man lives in vain if he is selfish and miserly. Man lives in vain if he has not got a generous heart, if he has no mercy and sympathy, if he does not lead a life of virtue, Tapas and meditation and if he does not help and serve religious institutions and religious teachers with uniform and artless courtesy and devotion.

86. Selfishness retards spiritual progress. If any one can destroy his selfishness, half of his spiritual Sadhana is over. No Samadhi or meditation is possible without eradication of this undesirable negative quality. Aspirants should direct their whole attention in the beginning towards the removal of this dire malady by protracted selfless disinterested service.

87. A selfish man is unrighteous. Attachment and sense of separateness are present in him to a remarkable degree. He cannot develop those qualities which Yoga needs. A desire to become a Yogi and to learn Yoga can only arise in a man who is free from selfishness, who is righteous, and who has religious disposition. Selfishness constricts the heart and forces a man to do injury to others and to get hold of the property of others by foul means. It is selfishness that prompts a man to do evil acts.

88. If you are attached to your wife and children, you cannot develop universal love. You cannot look upon all mankind as kith and kin. You cannot cultivate universal brotherhood. You cannot extend the same love which you have for your children to other children. You cannot consider all children as your own children. You will have a constricted or narrow heart. Your love will be confined to a few persons only. Through selfishness, you have created a boundary wall round the members of your family only. You always think: "Let my family members duly prosper. Let us only be happy. Why should I bother about the welfare of others?"

89. Whereas the man who has developed universal love has equal vision for all. He loves and embraces all.

All children are his. All men are his brothers. All women are his sisters. The whole world is his family. The whole world is his home. He sympathises with all. He serves all. He shares what he has with all. He cares for the well-being of all. He sacrifices his interests for the interest of others. He lives and dies for others. What a magnanimous personality! What an expanded heart he has! He is a veritable God on earth.

90. Blessed is he who has overcome all selfishness, crookedness and petty-mindedness. Blessed is he who has attained the supreme peace of the Eternal. Blessed is he who has found the Truth.

91. Eradicate greed and other selfish cravings. Do not be much intimate with anybody nor be wanting in friendship. Too much of everything is bad. Therefore always follow the golden mean.

92. Harischandra, Rantideva, Unchavritti, Sibi, Bali, the hunter, the pigeon and many more have attained eternal fame by their generosity and large-heartedness. Draw inspiration from them. Remember their names and spotless life they led. Your mind will be elevated to loftier heights of splendour and glory.

11. Destroy Jealousy and Prejudice

93. The stink of jealousy or selfishness is more abominable than the stink of a gutter or a suppurating boil or abscess. A boil with foul pus can be rendered neat and clean in a short time by using a potent antiseptic or a powerful disinfectant, but it is very difficult to remove the stink of jealousy in the mind. Constant Japa, ceaseless meditation and untiring selfless service are necessary to remove this loathsome stink of jealousy and selfishness.

94. Near relatives and fellows in office and those who have been bred together are more liable to entertain jealousy towards their equals when they are in a better position in life. This is seen in daily life. Brothers fight

and go to courts. Clerks in an office backbite and carry tales against their colleagues. It consumes the man like blazing fire. He can have no peace of mind. O man of jealousy, pitiable is your lot. Destroy this evil trait by cultivating nobility, generosity and large-heartedness. How long do you want to remain in this wretched condition? Are you not ashamed of your mean-mindedness? Be in the company of a noble man. Associate with Mahatmas and kill this ignoble evil quality.

95. A white man dislikes a black man and vice versa. A Samajist dislikes a Sanatanist and vice versa. A South Indian dislikes a man of Northern India and vice versa. A Saivite dislikes a Vaishnavite and vice versa. A Protestant dislikes a Catholic and vice versa. There is an inherent tendency in man to praise his own native place, his own country, his own family, his own clan or sect, his own mode of worship, his own religion, his own language and to censure those of others. This is petty-mindedness born of ignorance. When the heart of man expands through spiritual culture, when he gets Knowledge of the Self, these evil Vasanas will perish. Mark! How man is in a degraded and deplorable state on account of the influence of the Vasanas. Still he will not try to destroy these Vasanas. He clings to them like a leech and thinks he is always in the right path on account of delusion created by the Vasanas. Though he is in the body of a human being, he does the actions of a horizontal being.

96. Man finds it difficult to adjust to the ways and habits of others. His mind is filled with the prejudice of caste, creed and colour. He is quite intolerant. He thinks that his views, opinions and ways of living only are right and the views of others are incorrect. The faultfinding nature is ingrained in him. He jumps at once to find the faults of others. He has morbid eyes. He cannot see the good in others. He can brag of his own abilities and actions. That is the reason why he fights with all people and cannot keep up the friendship with others for a long

time. Aspirants do not make progress in the path of spirituality, because they too have these defects to a great degree. They should eradicate them completely by developing tolerance, pure love and other Sattvic qualities.

97. Jealousy is a fire. It eats up goodness just as fire consumes fuel. Therefore abandon jealousy totally and develop magnanimity and large-heartedness. Embrace all. Love all. You will soon enter the kingdom of God.

98. The Samskaras of vanity, cunningness, crookedness, arrogance, jealousy, petty-mindedness, fighting nature, boasting or bragging or self-esteem or thinking too much of one's self, speaking ill of others, belittling others may be still lurking in your mind. You cannot shine unless you remove them thoroughly. Success in meditation is not possible without eradicating these undesirable negative qualities of lower nature.

12. Discipline the Tongue

99. Be clean-hearted, sweet-tongued, true-tongued. Be courteous. Do not destroy your soul by anger and revenge. Live in harmony with others. You will soon attain eternal bliss and Immortality.

100. Observe Mouna (vow of silence). Discipline the tongue properly. Think thrice before you speak, before you let fall a word. Know the power of each word that you utter and the effect it will produce on the minds of others. Do not allow the tongue to run riot. Do not be garrulous. Speak a few words. Speak sweet and loving words. A word spoken once cannot be taken back like a shot sent at a target. Be careful in your speech. It is the speech that wounds a man more than the action. A harsh speech bleeds the heart and not the body. The wound in the body heals quickly but the wound in the heart caused by offensive speech never heals. The sufferings of the body are transitory and easily forgotten but not the sufferings of the heart. Speak measured words. Make

this a habit through protracted practice. You can then talk cautiously without thinking.

101. Speak politely. Be sweet in your speech. Do not praise yourself. Do not abuse anybody. Do not be discourteous. Give up backbiting as it is more grievous than adultery. Do not mock at others. Do not laugh on improper occasions. Do not treat the poor with contempt. Beware that you may be poor one day. Do not revenge. Be grateful.

102. Kind words are worth much but cost little. Therefore always speak kind words.

103. Subjugate the senses. Subdue the desires. Practise truth and austerity. Practise abstract meditation. Know the Self (Atman) and become Immortal.

13. Humility—The Path of Immortality

104. Humility is the path of Immortality. Vanity is the path of births and deaths. Simple living is the high road to the kingdom of Eternal Bliss. Luxury is the high road to the round of births and deaths.

105. Humility is a bomb of infinite potency which only can destroy the invincible citadel of egoism. Egoism is harder than granite or steel. A thousand bombs can destroy a big city or a country but the bomb of humility only which is more powerful than the sum total of all bombs of this world put together can annihilate this egoism. He who is endowed with humility can conquer the three worlds. He can win the hearts of all.

106. Be humble before teachers. Sympathise with all creatures. Make no distinction between one Sastra and another. Adhere strictly to the injunction of the Sastras. Become fearless. Crush this ego. Pulverise the lower nature. You will soon attain everlasting bliss.

107. Mere outward humility is of no use. It is hypocrisy. A man may prostrate before you half a dozen times and yet he will speak ill of you and vilify you at your

back. What is wanted is true humility wherein there is no outward show. True humility is the outcome of substantial spiritual growth.

108. Akrura went to Gokula at the command of Kamsa to take Sri Krishna and Balarama for the bow-sacrifice. As soon as Sri Krishna saw Akrura, he washed the feet of Akrura and shampooed his legs as he was fatigued by the journey. Lord Krishna carried bundles of firewood for his Guru Sandipani. Lord Krishna touched the feet of the Brahmin who brought the message from Rukmini with his own hands. Sri Krishna, the mighty Ruler of the three worlds, performed all these deeds which are considered as menial services in the eyes of the worldly-minded. Remember these actions of Sri Krishna. Become humble. Serve like Him untiringly. Consider every act as an offering unto the Lord. Then only you will have purification of heart, devotion unto the Lord and eventually Advaita realisation of oneness or unity of Self.

14. Be Self-Controlled

109. The final end of moral discipline is self-control. Your whole nature must be disciplined. Each organ or element requires its specific discipline.

110. Learn the science of self-control. Possess a steady mind by constant practice of meditation. Fix your mind upon God. You will have divine life. Light will shine. There will be an inflooding of all divine qualities. All negative tendencies will vanish. All conflicting forces will be reconciled. You will enjoy perfect harmony, undisturbed happiness and deep abiding peace.

111. Be self-controlled. Be just. Know the right. Keep to your promise. Be noble and impartial. Be like the ocean in depth, like Himalayas in firmness.

112. Do your duty to your father, mother, wife, son, relatives, friends, religious teachers, society and country. Do not be troubled by worldly care, worries,

anxieties, by sorrow or misfortune. Endeavour to remain calm and self-restrained amidst the vicissitudes of life. Discipline the mind. Have a balanced mind. You will have to struggle hard to attain this state of mind.

113. Life is a great pilgrimage. Do not stray away. March direct to the goal. That goal is God-realisation. The temple of God is within yourself. Awake. Arise. Purify. Meditate. The dark clouds will lead you on to the Light Divine.

114. Self-control, self-restraint and self-denial, are necessary for the realisation of the eternal bliss of the Supreme Self. Therefore develop these virtues to the maximum degree.

15. How to Purify Heart and Mind

115. A pure heart is the beginning of divinity. Purity is the gateway to God. It is ante-chamber to the presence of the Lord. It is the key by which the doors of intuition that lead to the abode of supreme peace are opened. Therefore attain purity at all costs.

116. Learn to cleanse your mind with the water of purity or celibacy or with the soap of divine love. How can you expect to become pure internally by merely washing the body with soap and water. Internal purity is more important than external purity.

117. Purify the mind. You will attain success in meditation only when the mind is pure and free from all extraneous thoughts. Calm the mind. Silence the bubbling thoughts and the surging emotions. Plunge yourself deep into the innermost recesses of your heart and enjoy the supreme silence of the Soul. Rest in silence. Know the Self and be free.

118. Purity is the passport to the foreign land of eternal bliss. If you hold this passport you can set sail to the yonder land where reign everlasting peace, unalloyed felicity and eternal sunshine.

119. You will have to attain purity first. When this is done half of your Sadhana is over. Anger must be controlled. Even irritability must be nipped. The eight breaks in Brahmacharya should be avoided. The Bhavana or feeling that all the forms are the manifestations of the Lord should be kept up during work also. Regularity in meditation is highly essential.

120. One who has no purity of heart though versed in the Vedic lore or scriptural knowledge cannot comprehend the Great One or the Supreme Soul, who dwells in the chambers of the hearts of all beings, who is the support for the world, who is all-pervading and self-luminous.

121. Control emotions and whims. Rub the edges of all angularities. Become more sober. Give up fantastic ideas. Develop more intense faith. Your faith is flickering now. Give up curiosity. Let there be real spiritual awakening and thirsting for God. Abandon all puerile, childish ideas. .

122. Worship God with flowers of purity, self-restraint, humility, wisdom and devotion.

123. The attainment of Chitta-Suddhi or purity of heart and other virtuous qualities are the A.B.C. of Yoga Sadhana.

124. Do not mistake the promptings of the lower mind for the voice of the soul. The higher mind which tends towards virtue is Sattvic mind or Suddha Manas. This higher mind elevates man. It guides him. It acts as a true preceptor. You should try to hear the voice of the Sattvic mind. If a wrong action is done, the Sattvic mind will prick you. This is the sign to know that an action is bad. If there is joy and elevation of mind, the act is a righteous one. That mind which tends towards luxury and evil is the lower or Rajasa-Tamasic mind. The mind is the cause for one's downfall. Annihilate Rajas and Tamas by increasing Sattva. You will be quite safe.

16. Contentment Is the Real Wealth

125. Contentment is real wealth. Contentment is natural wealth, because it gives peace of mind. Contentment is a sentinel on the domain of Moksha. If you keep company with him, if you befriend him, he will introduce you to his friends the other three sentinels, viz., Satsanga, Atma-Vichara and Santi. You can then very easily enter the illimitable kingdom of Moksha.

126. If you are earning one hundred rupees per month, do not compare yourself with a man who is earning five hundred rupees per month. If you compare, you will get discontentment. This will distract the peace of mind. Compare yourself with a man who is earning 25/- Rupees only per month. Thank God for having given you this present state. Contentment alone can calm your restless mind. There is no wealth greater than contentment. Worldly ambitions are useless. Aim high. Aim at attaining Brahman. This will annihilate all vain worldly ambitions. Worldly ambitions will land you in pain, sorrow and disappointment.

127. He who is humble, calm, quiet in mind and controlled in conduct and who is content in his heart finds the whole universe full of joy and bliss.

128. Peace is a divine attribute. It is a quality of the Soul. It cannot remain with greedy persons. It fills the pure heart. It deserts the lustful. It runs away from the selfish. It is an ornament of a Paramahamsa.

129. Cultivate peace first in the garden of your own heart by removing the weeds, viz., hatred, greed, selfishness, jealousy. Then only you can manifest it externally. Then only those who come in contact with you will be benefited by your vibrations of peace and harmony.

130. Inhibit all surging emotions and impulses. Direct your energies in the appropriate channel towards your chosen ideal. Develop the power of self-control. Keep the instruments in harmony. Master your

thoughts. Cultivate serenity of mind. Reserve your energy. Educate your will. Coordinate your innate tendencies. You will enjoy immense peace of mind. You will possess inner spiritual strength. You will have rapid spiritual progress.

17. Direct Enemies of Peace

131. Evil thought is the most dangerous thief. Good thought is like nectar. Virtue is the most precious treasure. Cultivate good thoughts by studying scriptures, by Satsanga, Japa and meditation.

132. Destroy evil thoughts, wrong desires, and unchaste looks by entertaining divine thoughts and by cultivating purity. God beholds all your thoughts and actions. He demands from you perfect purity of heart.

133. The first requisite for successful meditation is the conquest of anger and lust.

134. In some, lust may be more powerful than anger while in others anger may be more powerful than lust. You should attempt to annihilate these two evil traits, the direct enemies of peace.

135. Agitation or excitement in the mind, burning from lust, anger and hatred, restlessness from greed, worry and fear disturb the peace of mind. Japa, meditation, prayer, enquiry, Satsanga, development of virtues like Brahmacharya, patience, forgiveness, cosmic love, contentment, courage will remove these enemies of peace.

18. Be Always Hopeful

136. Hope is the source of good fortune. Hope causes the highest happiness indeed. Hope impels you always in all quests. Therefore be hopeful and make strenuous attempts. You will attain sanguine success.

137. Confidence is the companion of success. Therefore develop confidence in your own Self.

138. Hope is indeed mighty. There is no power which is mightier than hope. To one possessed of hope there is nothing unattainable indeed. Relying on hope alone, you will attain sanguine success in all your undertakings, in meditation and Self-realisation. Therefore be always hopeful. Nil desperandum. Never despair friend!

19. Develop Universal Love

139. Love your parents as much as you love God. If you cultivate love for one and all, you can have unselfish love for humanity. Love for humanity begins at home. First you love your parents, your brothers and sisters, your relatives, your neighbours, your school-mates, your community, your country, your land and then the whole world. Thus the small seed of love sown in the young mind of the child gradually develops into universal love.

140. Conquer the hearts of men through pure love. Adhere to truth and march victoriously in the field of Yoga. Annihilate egoism and enter the infinite domain of Supreme Peace. Destroy ignorance and attain knowledge of the Self. Crush the Vasanas and enter the illimitable realm of Eternal Bliss.

141. Love is harmony. It prolongs life. Fear, jealousy, envy and discord shorten life. Love lightens the burden of life and makes self-sacrifice a pleasure. Love is the great panacea for all ills that this flesh is heir to.

142. Apart from the knowledge of scriptures and erudition one should develop a tender heart. Austerity devoid of compassion, charity devoid of faith, spiritual Sadhana devoid of purity, a heart devoid of fellow-feeling, a life without prayer are all as fruitless as the waters of the sandy desert. Love, compassion or mercy, purity, truth, non-injury are the stepping-stones to success in the path of God-realisation. Satsanga, contentment, dispassion and patience are the different steps that lead to the portals of the kingdom of God.

143. Passive goodness alone is not sufficient. Active goodness or positive goodness is very essential for one's spiritual advancement. The aspirant should be ever doing actions. Not to harm others is passive goodness. This is negative goodness.

144. If you possess humility, obedience and a sweet tongue, you can enter into the hearts of anybody, you can subdue anybody.

145. Do your duties properly. Be firm in vows and true in speech. Possess good character. Be kind to all. Conquer wrath. Become master of self. Get rid of envy. You will soon attain God-realisation.

146. The Immortal can be attained only by performing acts of kindness continuously. Hatred, anger, jealousy are removed by continuous service with a loving heart. Lord Buddha still lives in our hearts. Why? Because he was extremely kind, did immense service and was an embodiment of compassion. You will get more strength, more joy, more satisfaction by doing kind acts. Your heart will be at rest when you are about to face death. You will be loved by all. Practice of compassion, charitable acts, kind service purify and soften the heart, turn the heart-lotus upwards and prepare the aspirant for the reception of Divine Light.

20. Advice to Sadhakas

147. Man is only a brute if he has no Manushyatva, if he does not possess mercy, love, kindness, self-control, good behaviour, courtesy, politeness, etc.

148. A kind, sympathetic, pure, loving and merciful heart is the garden. Virtuous Samskaras are the seeds. Sublime, divine thoughts are the roots. Sattvic qualities are the sprouts. Kind, loving, truthful words are the leaves. Virtuous actions are the blossoms. Moksha is the fruit. Therefore develop mercy. Entertain sublime thoughts. Speak truth. Do virtuous actions. Eat the divine fruit.

149. Do not fight against evil thoughts, evil qualities, defects, weaknesses and bad habits. If you fight against them, they will become stronger and stronger, and it will be difficult for you to overcome them by fighting against them. Cultivate sublime, divine thoughts. Develop virtuous qualities. Build up good habits. Do Japa. Meditate regularly. Try to live in God. All defects, all evil thoughts, all weaknesses will vanish in toto.

150. Righteousness, frankness, amiable disposition, kindness, benevolence, service and mercy will protect you from the acts of certain self-interested persons of undesirable character. Gradually cultivate these positive, Sattvic qualities one by one. You can win the hearts of all.

151. Have the wisdom of Vidura, the virtues of Yudhishthira, the purity of Bhishma, the liberality of Karna and the gallantry of Arjuna and the strength of Bhima. You will attain greatness and immortality.

152. To begin with, drink the Prem Mixture twice daily at 4 a.m. and 8 p.m. Mix a teaspoonful of Sraddha with 3 teaspoonfuls of Prem and half a teaspoonful of Bhava. Add to this mixture 2 teaspoonfuls of Hari Kirtan and one ounce of Japa. Gradually increase the quantities in the mixture. This will form an infallible specific or panacea for attaining Immortality and destroying the disease of births and deaths.

153. Eat three things. Wear three things. Practise three things, viz., Ahimsa, Satyam, Brahmacharya. Remember three things: death, pains of Samsara and God. Renounce three things: egoism, desire and attachment. Cultivate three things: humility, fearlessness and love. Eradicate three things: lust, anger and greed.

154. Action is the source of all virtue, wealth and desire. He who has no activity, has no energy or valour. The end of virtue and wealth is the attainment of

salvation. He who does not practise virtue commits sin. The fruits of righteous acts and of wealth occur either in this world or in the next.

155. Overcome anger by love, lust by purity, greed by liberality, pride by humility, egoism by self-surrender to the Lord. Thou wilt become Divine.

156. Earnestness is the path of blessedness. Thoughtless- ness is the royal road to births and deaths. Evince more earnestness and enthusiasm in your Sadhana. You will soon attain the Immortal.

157. Sit less, serve more. Hate none, love all. Clothe less, bathe more. Take less, give more. Talk less, think more. Eat less, masticate more. Preach less, practise more. Worry less, laugh more. Indulge less, restrain more. Rest less, work more. Sleep less, meditate more. You will enjoy wonderful health and inner peace of the Soul.

158. Do not become a victim of your emotions. Govern them. Control them. Do not allow yourself to be governed by them. That man who has controlled his emotions has a serene mind. He is really a strong man.

159. Give up hate and strife and greed for power, position and gold. Wear the crown of humility. Become pure and bright. Build your faith in God. Be steadfast in your Japa and meditation. Attain love and light.

160. If you take a vow, you will have to stick to it even at the cost of your life, even if your throat is cut, even if you are burnt alive, even under any sort of persecution.

161. If you fail in keeping your resolves, make fresh resolves. Just as the child falls many a time when it tries to walk without the help of the wall, just as the new cyclist falls from the cycle a number of times before he learns to sit steadily in the seat, so also the new aspirant will fall a number of times in his resolves. He has to make repeated attempts. Ultimately he will come out victoriously.

162. If you leave the public service simply because some jealous persons attempted to vilify and injure you, simply because you will have to face various sorts of bitter experiences, it is a great loss for you. Your spiritual growth will be terribly retarded. You must have moral strength and moral courage to face public criticism, harsh remarks and persecution. Your suffering is nothing when compared with the persecutions undergone by Sri Rama and the five Pandavas. Show your manliness, moral courage and the spiritual strength now. The inner strength that you have obtained by meditation is tested now. Had you really done good meditation, you ought to have abundant strength now to face these difficulties with a smile. If you have no strength, it shows that there had been some error in meditation. Real meditation gives immense inner strength.

163. Serve and love. Give and relinquish. Tolerate and endure. Restraine and subdue. Forget and forgive. Adjust and adapt. Persevere and plod on. Aspire and purify. Reflect and enquire. Meditate and realise. May you attain Kaivalya!



TWENTY IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

By

H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj

1. BRAHMA-MUHURTA: Get up at 4 a.m. daily. This is Brahmamuhurta which is extremely favourable for meditation on God.

2. ASANA: Sit on Padma, Siddha or Sukha Asana for Japa and meditation for half an hour, facing the east or the north. Increase the period gradually to three hours. Do Sirshasana and Sarvangasana for keeping up Brahmacharya and health. Take light physical exercises as walking, etc., regularly. Do twenty Pranayamas.

3. JAPA: Repeat any Mantra as pure Om or Om Namo Narayanaya, Om Namah Sivaya, Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya, Om Saravanabhavaya Namah, Sita Ram, Sri Ram, Hari Om, or Gayatri, according to your taste or inclination, from 108 to 21,600 times daily.

4. DIETETIC DISCIPLINE: Take Sattvic food, Suddha Ahara. Give up chillies, tamarind, garlic, onion, sour articles, oil, mustard, asafoetida. Observe moderation in diet (Mitahara). Do not overload the stomach. Give up those things which the mind likes best for a fortnight in a year. Eat simple food. Milk and fruits help concentration. Take food as medicine to keep the life going. Eating for enjoyment is sin. Give up salt and sugar for a month. You must be able to live on rice, Dhal and bread without any chutni. Do not ask for extra salt for Dhal and sugar for tea, coffee or milk.

5. MEDITATION-ROOM: Have a separate meditation-room under lock and key.

6. CHARITY: Do charity regularly, every month, or even daily according to your means, say six paise per rupee.

7. SVADHYAYA: Study systematically the Gita, the Ramayana, the Bhagavata, Sri Vishnu-Sahasranama, Lalita-Sahasranama, Aditya Hridaya, Upanishads or Yoga Vasishtha, the Bible, Zend Avesta, the Koran, the Tripitakas, the Granth Sahib, etc., from half an hour to one hour daily and have Suddha Vichara.

8. BRAHMACHARYA: Preserve the vital force (Veerya) very, very carefully. Veerya is God in motion or manifestation—Vibhuti. Veerya is all power. Veerya is all money. Veerya is the essence of life, thought and intelligence.

9. PRAYER SLOKAS: Get by heart some prayer-Slokas, Stotras and repeat them as soon as you sit in the Asana before starting Japa or meditation. This will elevate the mind quickly.

10. SATSANGA: Have Satsanga. Give up bad company, smoking, meat and alcoholic liquors entirely. Do not develop any evil habits.

11. FAST ON EKADASI: Fast on Ekadasi or live on milk and fruits only.

12. JAPA MAALA: Have Japa Maala (rosary) round your neck or in your pocket or underneath your pillow at night.

13. MOUNA: Observe Mouna (vow of silence) for a couple of hours daily.

14. SPEAK THE TRUTH: Speak the truth at all cost. Speak a little. Speak sweetly.

15. SIMPLE LIVING: Reduce your wants. If you have four shirts, reduce the number to three or two. Lead a happy, contented life. Avoid unnecessary worry. Have plain living and high thinking.

16. NEVER HURT ANYBODY: Never hurt anybody (Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah). Control anger by love, Kshama (forgiveness) and Daya (compassion).

17. DO NOT DEPEND UPON SERVANTS: Do not depend upon servants. Self-reliance is the highest of all virtues.

18. SELF-ANALYSIS: Think of the mistakes you have committed during the course of the day, just before retiring to bed (self-analysis). Keep daily diary and self-correction register. Do not brood over past mistakes.

19. FULFIL DUTIES: Remember that death is awaiting you at every moment. Never fail to fulfil your duties. Have pure conduct (Sadachara).

20. SURRENDER TO GOD: Think of God as soon as you wake up and just before you go to sleep. Surrender yourself completely to God (Saranagati).

Om Santih Santih Santih!

**This is the essence of all spiritual Sadhanas.
This will lead you to Moksha. All these Niyamas or
spiritual canons must be rigidly observed.
You must not give leniency to the mind.**

The words of him who has known the man in and out as an open book, alone carry the light and power to penetrate deep into the inner secret chambers of human mind. That too when he is a sage of highest Realisation. Swami Sivanandaji, with a heart brimming with love towards the whole of humanity, excels in all his attempts to lift the man from his age-old stupor and delusion to eternal, joyful awakening.

Without a strong foundation of ethics in its practicality, the tower of life can crumble and collapse at any moment, no matter whichever stature it has attained. Therefore the relevance of this timeless teaching is highlighted. Every word of this teaching is direct. Like an arrow it penetrates you and does its work.



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